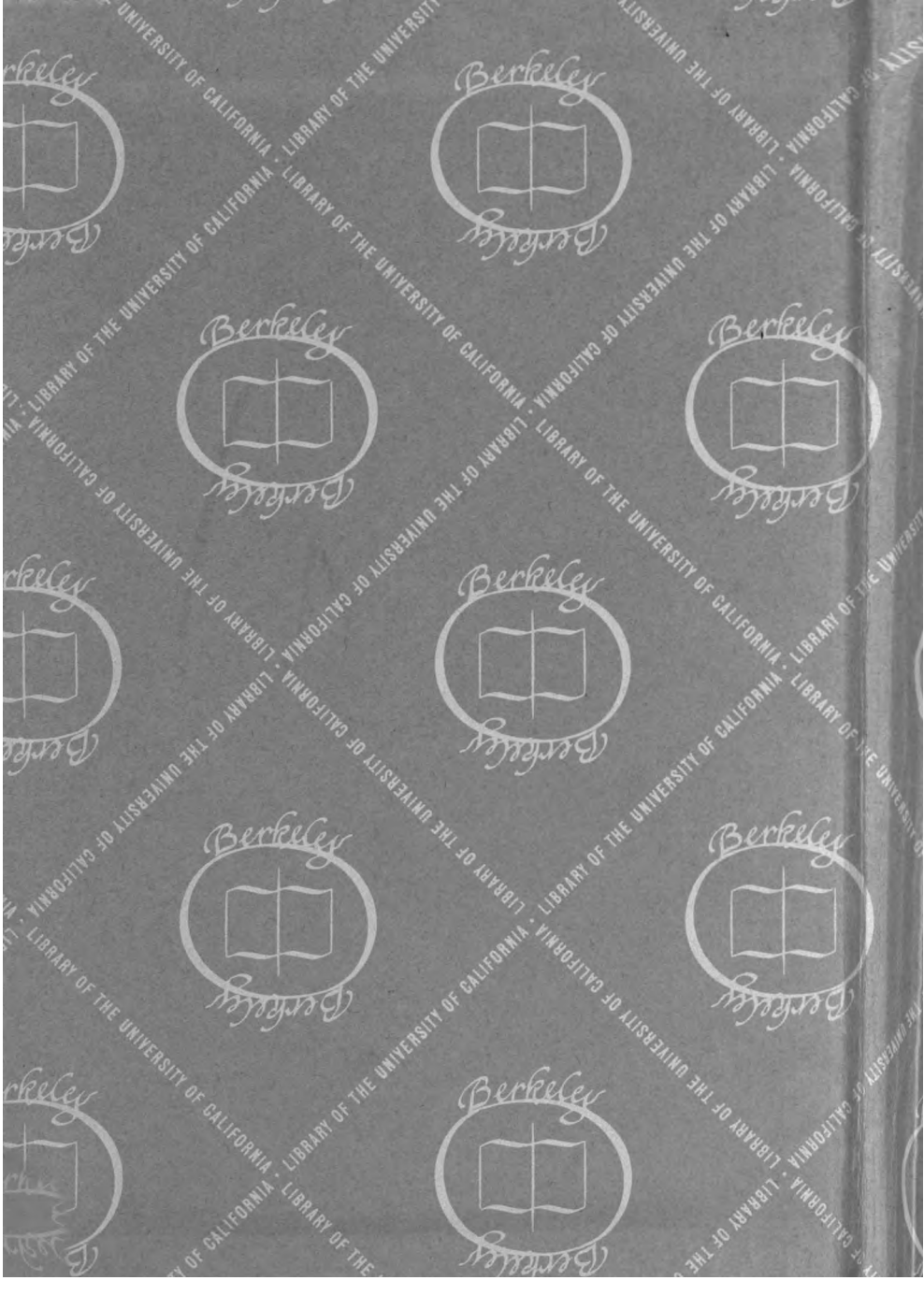
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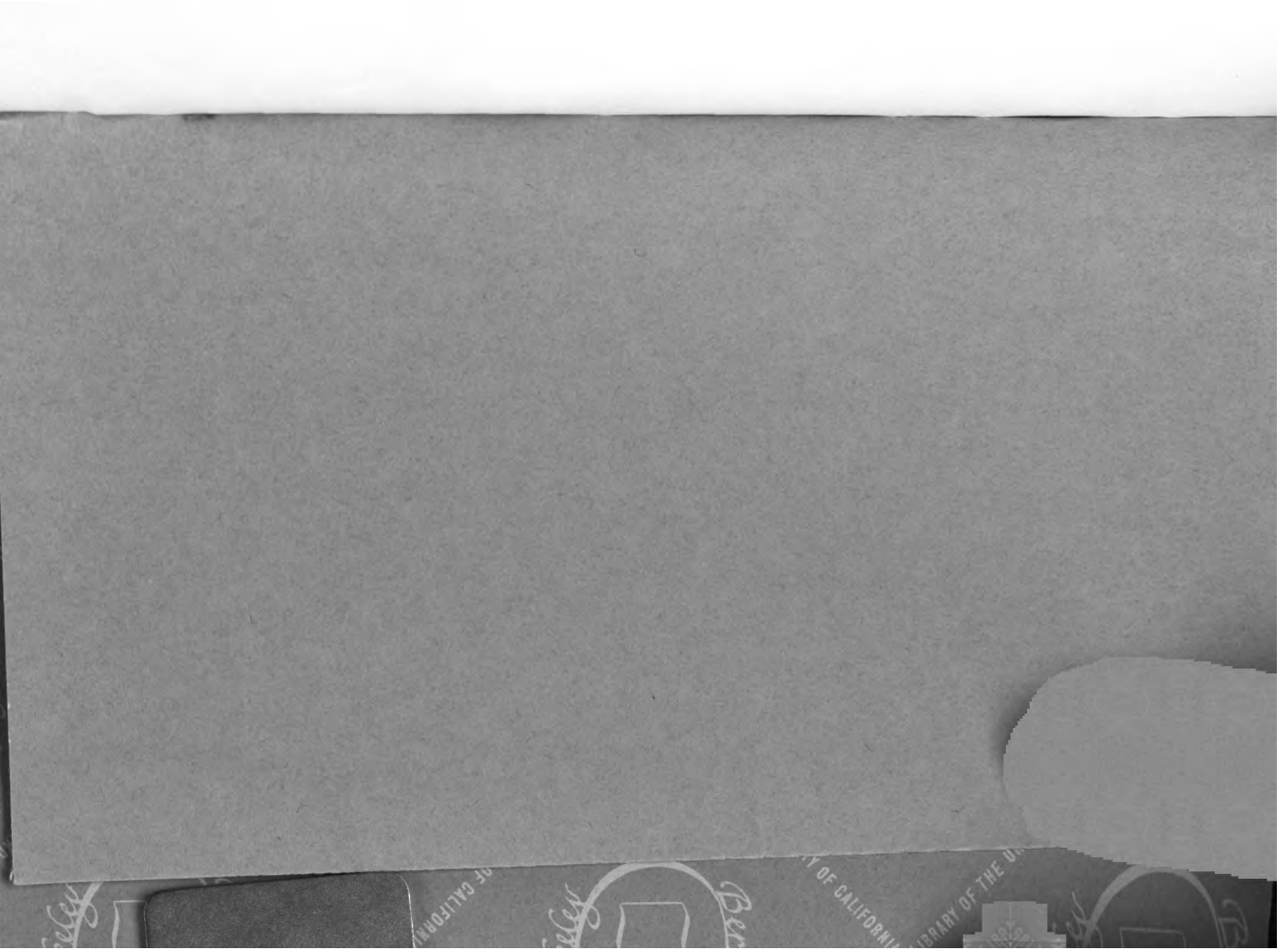

GERMANY NOT GUILTY IN 1914

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(Examining a Much Prized Book)

By

M. H. COCHRAN
Ph.D. (Harvard)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

With a Foreword by
HARRY ELMER BARNES, PH.D.

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Foreword

By HARRY ELMER BARNES

A FRIEND of mine, surely cynical enough, tells me that American scholars live in little worlds, each world a water-tight compartment, and that the academic world as a whole is insulated from any effective contact with the greater world about us. I suppose he is right—my cynical friends have a habit of being right. At least, he can point to the fact that the protest of a thousand economists did not have the slightest effect on the provisions of the Smoot-Hawley tariff. My friend then accused me, and by implication all the rest of us who are interested in pre-war diplomacy, of riding a purely academic hobby. Our conversation ran something like this.

I defended my interest in the war guilt question by asserting that, if any one thing stands in the way of the international harmony we should all like to see, it is Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles. "Quite right," he agreed, "but what do you expect to do with your microscopic study of the documents of the two weeks which preceded the war? You amuse yourselves, all of you scholars, and flatter yourselves that you are doing something. But it is really very simple. Why don't you read what Harold Nicolson says in his biography of his father? Through his own

career and his family connections he certainly had a better insight into what was going on than any grubby scholar, who never had power over anything more than his own students' grades, can ever have."

I handed him my copy of the "Portrait of a Diplomatist" and invited him to proceed with his indictment. He read, "'The war was caused by an unhealthy state of mind in Europe . . . it displays a false sense of historical values to lay disproportionate stress upon the intricate diplomatic evolutions which took place during the last twelve days. . . . Europe was to blame for having twisted herself into competing alliances.' "

"Then," continued my candid friend, "did you ever read Nicolson's introductory remarks? 'The Germans, during the period which I cover, were fired by exactly the same motives and energies which illumine what we still regard as one of the most noble passages in our early history. We, for our part, were protected against all imprudence by the repletion, passivity, and, I should add, the selfishness of old age.' If that isn't enough for anybody, why bother with trying to make him see horse sense?"

"I am afraid," I countered, "that you don't quite understand. And besides, two can read that book as well as one. Let me have it, please."

I read from page 314. Nicolson (Sir Arthur and not his biographer-son) in 1917 "was incensed by the theory, which was even then being propagated, that Germany had provoked the war. He set himself to write an article . . . in which he put the German

case more fairly. He concluded this article with a note of warning."

" 'All are anxious for a durable peace, but there will be little hope of durability if it were thought to impose on great communities terms which would be regarded as intolerable or humiliating and which would sow the seeds of revengeful animosity.' "

Nicolson, the account continued, later "was appalled by the Treaty of Versailles. Particularly did he resent the paragraph which obliged Germany by force to admit that she was solely responsible for the war. He considered that paragraph both undignified and meaningless. 'I cannot understand it,' he would say, 'you cannot impose a moral judgment upon a whole people. I feel sure that we old diplomatists would not have done such a thing. I think some people were more responsible than others, such as Aehrenthal, but not a whole nation.' "

"Now," I said, turning to my friend, "in spite of such remarks by a man who presumably knew all about British foreign policy, a few American scholars prefer to pass a moral judgment upon a whole people, and they do so on the basis of the twelve days preceding the war. What, if anything, do you suggest a man can do? Surely if in 1919 Nicolson could be appalled by Article 231, in 1931 some of us may be appalled that the Article is still in the treaty and that men yet defend it, all on the basis of the diplomacy of the two weeks before the war. Is anyone entirely foolish to point out at length that even

the diplomacy of that brief period can not accurately be used to justify such a judgment?"

My candid friend said, "I am sure it is a waste of time. But it is your time to waste, so why don't you ask them if they never studied Burke on 'Conciliation' in preparatory school? Ask them if they think they really can indict a whole people. And, quite seriously, have these historian friends and enemies of yours never heard of the elementary logical principle that no conclusion can be more valid than its premises? Here I read two fat volumes by your Chicago professor, filled with hair-splitting minor decisions based on the study of hundreds of documents, and most of the decisions open to very serious dispute. Then on the bog of these dubious sub-conclusions, this author would erect some impregnable major conclusions, but they would all tend under his handling to prove a patent absurdity. He seems to think that by some extra subtle logic maybe he can after all indict a people. To be sure, he thinks he can take refuge in saying that he is simply assessing the responsibilities of individual statesmen—but the tacit assumption he makes is that he can thus indict a people. Was there ever a more bewildering and humorless method, even in the hands of a cloistered scholar who has had no experience of the world?"

That onslaught was frankly directed at me as much as at anyone else. I repeated the obvious retort that as our opponents defend Article 231 on the basis of immediate pre-war diplomacy, we could show that even this defense was not tenable.

My friend shrugged his shoulders, and said, "Well, you may be sure of several things. If an archæologist ever digs up evidence that a man named Jonah once went sailing, a good many theologians will hail it as proof that the whale swallowed Jonah. And simultaneously they will cheerfully ignore their forced retreat from many untenable positions. In the same way, one error on your part, or a new book which might in honesty force you to change your opinions in the slightest, will be acclaimed as proof of your opponents' thesis *in toto*. And a thousand of their retreats from untenable positions will be ignored. But don't despair—politicians may be glad of the consolation they can get from your opponents' books, but only until the next shift in international groupings will make the same politicians turn to you, to bolster up their new pretensions of the Lord knows what. In the meantime, then, amuse yourselves, amuse yourselves."

Noting that I still remained good-natured, my friend proceeded to warm up on the subject of professors of history. "Suppose you do succeed in exposing unmercifully all the myths about the German gorilla which we once swallowed, do you expect that any prominent historian will modify his views, or publicly divulge any such change of heart? I read an article in the *American Mercury* a year or so ago by a fellow named Babcock who seemed to know what he was talking about. This was after all your stuff had been published and oceans of similar material in Europe. Yet Babcock showed that the minds

of our school children are still being poisoned by the same old lies which were told back in 1920. And these textbooks are not written by the old-time literary hacks; they are put out with all the prestige which attaches to the authorship of eminent college professors of history. One college book-man bemoaned to me the fact that Hazen's book sells ten times as profusely as Flick's, which he told me was the only college book on modern history which gives the full truth about the causes of the World War. He told me how one prominent historian had been pleading with book companies for years to bring out a college textbook which told the truth about war origins. When he saw Flick's book he almost wept with delight and gratitude, and rushed to the college book store to place an order for seven hundred copies. But that night he got to thinking about the possible effect of this on the administration, the trustees and the parents of his students. So the next day he rushed back to the book store, cancelled his order for Flick and placed one instead for the most notorious purveyor of the musty myths about 1914.

"You have been jumping on Schmitt for the last five years, yet when his book appeared I read publisher's blurbs from the moguls of your profession fit for one of old Leopold von Ranke's masterpieces. A bright young fellow in my home town attends one of your great universities. He tells me that his professor of modern European history has denounced Fay in his graduate seminar for not going far enough towards extreme revisionism and that he

has been poking fun at Schmitt for years. Yet when Schmitt's book was published he supplied one of the most glowing blurbs, declaring that the book was the most convincing thing he had ever read on the subject. He told me of another eminent professor who had been sputtering bitterly about Schmitt's book to everybody he met. But when he published his review of the book in a great historical journal, he had nothing but phrases of honey to offer. Another literary friend of mine 'in the know' tells me that the Pulitzer Prize was bestowed on Schmitt's book by the vote of one of the most highly honored of American historians. You, yourself, have admitted that Schmitt is going to be sent over to Geneva through the influence of the historian whom you most admired in your academic days. Where do you expect to get with men who have one opinion for their intimate friends and advanced students and exactly the opposite to give out to the public? It is not what one of your professors says in his smoking-jacket that counts, but what he gives out on public platforms, in your forbidding historical journals and in the public press."

I had to admit the force of his attack, but proceeded to tell him that there were some encouraging signs. "You must remember," I told him, "that most of these men who still stick to their guns in the spirit of 1918 were members of the National Board for Historical Service. Many went to Paris and helped to make the Peace Treaty which is based on the charge that Germany started the war. It is true that

our textbooks have changed but little, yet Carl Becker has just brought out a school text on modern history which tells the whole truth about how the war came and tells it in a most engaging fashion. He will be the next president of the American Historical Association. Further, the younger generation of scholars do not permit any such gulf between their private and their public opinions as you charge against the elder statesmen of the historical craft. Langer, Swain and Moon, for example, have not been afraid to write what they preach and teach. Even the elders cannot stand out against the world. In France, for example, there are two good and honest books on war guilt published for every one which reiterates the old nonsense. Then we have our greatest hope in our students. Let them discover a professor telling them one thing and then writing another and his influence in keeping alive myths and lies is done forever with the sophisticated and candid youngsters who listen to him. Give us another ten years and there may be a quite different picture from the one you present."

We left the question about like that, and perhaps it would be as well if I took good advice and lapsed into silence. But with my well-known persistence I return to the subject of war responsibility. It *is* silly, of course, to try to indict a people, just as it is absurd to try to build impregnable major conclusions on numberless hair-splitting minor conclusions. Yet some of us continue to hope against hope that we may yet see a little common decency in interna-

tional relations, and we think that Article 231 is still the most important obstacle in the way of this common decency. If, then, those who insist that a people can be indicted, base their claims on a detailed study of pre-war diplomacy, let us investigate their best claim. If even this best claim is proved to be full of the most astonishing errors, we may still feel that, however humorless we seem in our efforts to rout our equally ludicrous opponents, we have made untenable even this last refuge of those who would indict, not a whole people but several peoples.

On some such grounds as these, then, I take it that Professor Cochran's study of Professor Schmitt's "The Coming of the War" can be justified as a valuable and timely piece of scholarship. Of the competence of the study, I need say little. It will impress the most casual reader as a magnificently careful analysis of a book which, however elusive in argument and slovenly in such an elementary requirement of scholarship as accuracy in translation, is yet important. It is indeed, and is recognized to be, the best presentation written in America of the point of view which most of us shared during the war. If, as Professor Cochran's study will demonstrate with surprising completeness, even this best effort of those who think that the diplomats of the Central Powers were primarily responsible for the war, must be abandoned, perhaps we may take a little hope.

As my cynical friend said, it probably is stupid to think that any man, whatever his assumption of rigorous scholarship, will abandon his position in the

face of any evidence or of demonstrated inaccuracies on his own part—inaccuracies so amateurish that his worst enemies are startled to find them. Well, so be it. At the very least, now that Professor Cochran has made his study it will be increasingly difficult for anyone who professes a bowing acquaintance with the war guilt literature to maintain with true confidence the claims of those who would still "impose a moral judgment upon a whole people."

Professor Cochran's analysis cannot be regarded as an *ex parte* enterprise. Among the truly great experts on the question of war responsibility he has been one of the few who have taken a broad view of the whole controversy detached from either Bitter-enders, Salvagers or Revisionists. Eminent specialists of pronounced Revisionist trend like Fay, Langer, Swain and Moon might be suspected by the Bitter-enders of desiring to support their own position, however excellent and exactingly accurate their work should be. No such charge can be launched against Professor Cochran. In his notable article in *Current History,* of April, 1927, he declared his position as a "middle-of-the-road" man and he has been a frequent if honest critic of the decisive Revisionism represented by writers like myself and those who share my views. He has not been motivated by partisanship but by honest indignation at flagrant abuses of the elementary principles of historical method and the fulsome praise of such behavior by supposedly eminent specialists in the profession.

The book marks an innovation in American his-

torical writing. It is the first time that the spirit of thorough and searching criticism of a living historian—so gratifyingly common in Continental European scholarship—has been illustrated on a full-size scale in the United States.

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Comments on

Professor Bernadotte Everly Schmitt's

"The Coming of the War, 1914"

"Without question, one of the major achievements of American historians. . . . It is an epochal and authoritative study."—*Professor James T. Shotwell.*

"The most detailed, comprehensive and up-to-date account of the immediate origins of the Great War which has appeared in any language. . . . Its scholarly thoroughness makes it an indispensable *vade mecum* to every careful student of the war."—*Professor Sidney Bradshaw Fay.*

"The author has performed his task with a degree of skill, subtlety, comprehensiveness, and erudition which must command the highest respect of all who have done scientific work in the field. . . . He is thoroughly the historian, never the propagandist."
—*Professor Frederick L. Schuman, in New York Nation.*

"Professor Schmitt's work is really monumental. It leaves little more to be said about the pre-War diplomacy of July, 1914." —*Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes, in Saturday Review of Literature.*

"Professor Schmitt's book is a masterpiece of erudition and interpretation."
—*Professor Jonathan French Scott, New York Sun.*

"Both style and reasoning are superb, which, with the able mobilization of the evidence in cumulative fashion, presents the most convincing story on the point I have had an opportunity to read."—*Professor William E. Lingelbach.*

"It is a very remarkable piece of work, and, unless the French documents are especially revealing should be the last word on the subject."—*Professor T. W. Riker.*

"The documentation seems satisfactory in every detail —convincing to a layman."—*Professor Elbert J. Benton.*

"A masterly book, which made the Anti-Versaillists sick at heart."—*Winston Churchill.*

Professor Schmitt's "Coming of the War" was awarded the George Louis Beer Prize by the American Historical Association, and the Pulitzer Prize of 1931 for the best book of the year on American history.

GERMANY NOT GUILTY IN 1914

CHAPTER I

Professor Schmitt and the Salvagers

I. Introduction

AMERICAN tradition has it that no professional historian should write in disparaging terms of another's work. This tradition does not prevail in Europe, where the historians attack each other's conclusions with ruthless and beneficial ferocity. It does not restrain historians, even in America, from diatribes against writers that are considered outside the fold, such as sociologists, journalists, lawyers, etc. Nor does the tradition apply so strictly to historians who are opposed to the safe, conservative "constructive" view. It applies chiefly to approved historians in established positions. Their work, no matter how damaging to the profession, must not be attacked.

Now, we have in this country a large group of historians whose chief efforts are directed toward salvaging what they can of the Entente theories in

regard to the origins of the World War. The salvaging purpose, it is clear, is flatly contrary to the best historical method that requires an open mind and no purpose except pursuit of truth. Moreover, the salvaging process is carried out through methods that are intolerably unhistorical. The question arises, "Should these facts be stated or not?" "Does an historian's profession, or position, or viewpoint entitle him to a respect not granted to others?"

The disadvantages of the old tradition seem to me convincing evidence against its value. For, as a result of this tradition, strange and ridiculous doctrines gain currency throughout the country. The profession suffers from the disdain of intellectuals who penetrate the feebleness of the historical construction. The great majority of readers, who have no time to conduct the research necessary to a proper judgment of the historian's work, accept foolish doctrines and spread them through school and community. Now there can be no question that sound conclusions arrived at through correct and logical methods are often misinterpreted when disseminated through the public mind. But that is no excuse for the historian's failure to do his utmost to reach sound conclusions or to point out unsound conclusions in his colleagues' work.

Violent criticism of demonstrably unsound history involves no personalities. It is not necessary to talk of the man; but it is necessary to talk freely of his work and to explain why his methods do or do not advance the investigation of the subject.

I apologize for taking so much space for such elementary considerations in justification of this little book. Would that the common practise of historians were frank enough to render this preface dispensable. Would that we could all copy the practise of Charles Francis Adams, who, on every appearance, gave a new version of Anglo-American relations during the Civil War and utterly demolished his own previous constructions—to the great benefit and advancement of our knowledge of the subject.

II. The Salvagers vs. the Revisionists

For a number of years much argument has been spent on the question as to which book on the origin of the World War is the best, and which is the worst. With the publication of Professor B. E. Schmitt's "The Coming of the War"[1] one of these arguments is settled definitely, for there can no longer be any doubt as to who has written the worst.

This is not a matter of "opinions" but of scholarship. The glaring mistranslations, the unpardonable slashing of documents, the rank errors of interpretation in reckless defiance of the accepted canons of historical method, and, finally, the eccentric judgments stated in partly extravagant, partly evasive, and always inadequate English, place this book beyond the historical pale.

That such an unsatisfactory book could be published and receive high commendation[2] in this

[1] Scribner's, New York, 1930, 2 volumes.
[2] See the quotations in the front.

country is a phenomenon that requires explanation. Ordinarily, an historian's work is judged by the standards of exactness of research, nicety of judgment and fitness of style. But here is a work that rates very low in all of these matters. Why is it tolerated, even extolled?

The first thing to notice is that pro-Entente writers in this country and elsewhere are notoriously shabby in their accounts of the origin of the World War. Their books and articles make no real approach to logic, accuracy or balanced judgment. Evidently they feel so sure of their public that they can repeat the myths of German guilt in utter disregard of the evidence and the researches that prove the contrary. This was particularly apparent after Professor Fay's careful work[8] demolished the pro-Entente thesis convincingly; the defenders of the grand old cause rushed into print in such frenzied anxiety that they made astonishingly inaccurate and misleading statements about the book.

It is true that Professor Fay dealt sledge-hammer blows at the Entente theories and put their defenders into a difficult position. But it is also true that the only sound method of reply was exact statement and careful refutation. Instead of that we were treated to stories of antique and discredited origin, to errors in quotation from the book, to mistranslations and to wild, sensationalist statements that a careful examination of the sources showed to be

[8] "The Origins of the World War," Macmillan, New York, 1928, 2 volumes.

quite erroneous. The curious reader can find the whole lurid story in my article in the *American Monthly*.[4]

The general attitude of Entente defenders toward "revisionism" is no less astounding. Clemenceau, in his "Grandeur and Misery of Victory" (p. 105), stated bluntly, "For the catastrophe of 1914 the Germans are responsible. Only a professional liar would deny this." M. Renouvin, a trifle less extravagantly, attributes the entire "revisionist" movement to German propaganda.[5] On the next page he declares that France is indifferent to the question, a curious manner of dodging the fact that France has given us the most brilliant, the wittiest and the most courageous of the revisionist movements. Likewise our own Professor Schmitt practically disregards the revisionists—except for his inaccurate reviews of their books.

Presumably they think that no amount of proof will upset the verdict of Versailles. For behind that verdict stand the victorious Allies who expect to profit politically and economically. Indeed, France has profited handsomely from the Treaty and from the legend that she was attacked in 1914. She has been able to evade the payment of her debts and to build up a strong military and financial power that has become a direct menace to the balance of power, to the preservation of peace and to capitalism itself.

In private, some of the Entente propagandists ad-

[4] Vol. XXII, No. 8, August 1929, pp. 10, 11, 26, 28.
[5] *L'Esprit International*, Paris, Vol. III, No. 10, April 1, 1929, p. 236.

mit with Lloyd George that the Great Powers "staggered and stumbled" into the war; but in public, when the question is raised in connection with reparations, it becomes a *chose jugée*. The treaty must not be touched, they say, because in the treaty German war-guilt is made the justification for the payment of reparations. The procedure recommended by Sir Edward Grey is silently to consider the verdict against Germany unsound but to refrain from altering the treaty.[6]

In brief, the Entente apologists think that the governments, business men, editors and intellectuals are so firmly convinced of German guilt that they need not bother to be careful in their statements. The overwhelming mass of the people, as usual, have been propagandized into passivity. Hence there is no need for meticulous care in logic or historiography and no need to take revisionist arguments seriously.

Well, they are badly mistaken. If they think that they can excuse their deficiencies in historical scholarship by preaching on the right side of a great "moral" crusade, they are mistaken. For intelligent people will not tolerate their shiftlessness much longer. And if they know so little of diplomatic or economic history as to think that the Versailles treaty will last forever, they are doubly mistaken. For the political and economic scene has shifted already.

The official moralizing in the different countries

[6] See his introduction to the popular edition of his "Memoirs," London, 1928.

was always received with great scepticism among the intellectuals, even during the war. Men like Mencken, Brandes, Shaw and Rolland cannot be bull-dozed into silly beliefs. When you add to them many of the socialists and pacifists who were opposed to war on principle, you find a considerable body of writers and thinkers who never accepted the official propaganda.

Until after the war, the historians played no prominent part in the fundamental duty of cleansing the Augean stables in the national mind. Then the German arguments and the new documents began to circulate freely. Professor Fay wrote his famous articles in the *American Historical Review* in 1920-21,[7] and since then the revisionists have been gaining greater and greater strength in this country. The mere fact that the Germanic powers were more willing to publish their documents in full led to the inevitable conclusion, since proved quite sound, that the Allies had a great deal to conceal.

In 1924 the movement received fresh impetus from Professor Barnes, who immediately put himself at the head of a more advanced and more vigorous group.[8] He attacked the "bitter-enders" with such vigor as to discredit them entirely. In addition, books and articles of recognized merit came from the pens of more conservative revisionists.[9] The

[7] July, Oct., 1920 and Jan. 1921. Vol. XXV, pp. 616-639; Vol. XXVI, pp. 37-53; and Vol. XXVI, pp. 225-254.

[8] *Current History*, May 1924, pp. 171-195; "The Genesis of the World War," New York, Knopf, 1926, 1927 and 1929; "In Quest of Truth and Justice," Chicago, National Historical Society, 1928; *L'Angleterre et la Guerre Mondiale*, Paris, Delpeuch, 1929; and numerous periodical articles.

[9] See the list in Barnes, "Genesis of the World War," 3rd ed., pp. 662-683.

movement attained an extent and an intensity that make up for its paucity of adherents. To disregard this movement altogether or to represent it as the result of German propaganda is just plain historical obscurantism.

What is most significant in the revisionist movement in this country is the tendency of the more moderate revisionists to join the extreme revisionist camp. The moderates have been gradually forced by the facts to see that Austria-Hungary had the right to chastise Serbia and that Russian intervention could not be called self-defense.

The most notable recent example of this tendency can be found in the new edition of Professor Fay's "Origins of the World War"[10] where one reads that the new Austrian documents bring him "to a less severe judgment on Austrian policy as compared with that of Russia. They make more clear how much Austria had to bear with from Serbia (more or less backed by Russia)" . . . "Austria, in acting against Serbia, was taking the only step by which she believed she could preserve her very existence as a state. Russia, however, in claiming to protect Serbia and to exercise a kind of protection over the Balkan Slavs, did not have any such vital interest at stake; her existence as a state was not in jeopardy; her interest was more to preserve and increase her prestige. Austria's action aimed at a localized war. Russia's action made inevitable a European war."

What more would an extreme revisionist say, in

[10] Macmillan, 1930, Vol. I, p. 569.

regard to the fundamental nature of the conflict, than just that? Indeed, with the complete collapse of the apologies presented by Renouvin, Poincaré, Sazonov and Grey little is left of the old Entente mythology. Specialists like Langer and Swain as well as Fay are coming to the position that Demartial stated so well when he said that the notion of divided responsibility in the summer of 1914 is as far wide of the truth as the notion of unique German guilt.

While the experts in the field, then, are swinging decidedly over to the Barnes-Demartial position, the other historians still try to cling to the Entente Epic as a sort of Book of Revelations. For one reason or another these historians feel they must maintain the old nonsensical propaganda of 1914.[11] They have relied on Professor Schmitt, the only American specialist in the field who tries to uphold the phantasies of 1914, as the one last hope of redemption. "The Coming of the War" was hailed as the redeeming book that would upset all the work the best revisionists have done. That hope was all in vain; the unhistorical construction of "The Coming of the War" precludes the possibility that it will upset a single tenet of the well-laid revisionist foundation.

In addition to the historians' destruction of the basis of the Versailles Treaty, with its reparations obligations based on the absurd lie of German guilt for the war, there are economic and political factors

[11] Cf. the outspoken article in the *American Mercury* by C. M. Babcock, "The Pedagogues Stand Pat," Vol. XIX, No. 75, March 1930, pp. 290-298.

working relentlessly toward revision. That is the actual state of affairs today, so far as it bears on the war guilt question.

In the face of these conditions, pro-Entente writers who imagine that "revisionism" is not to be taken seriously are naïve to the point of ridiculousness. One would expect that the "salvagers" would be all the more cautious, would translate German documents carefully, would examine all the possibilities before deciding dubious cases and would give us serious, not careless work. And yet the fact remains that Professor Schmitt has just issued two volumes in the old brazen manner, with talk of German attempts to "terrorize Europe," with talk of German lies and British loyalty, with talk, even, of the Kaiser and Moltke as the villains. Such a phenomenon is most difficult to understand.

III. Professor Schmitt

What is clear is that Professor Schmitt's record has been very pro-Entente, with occasional lapses into surface manifestations of impartiality. His "England and Germany, 1740-1914,"[12] published in 1916, was obviously an attempt to return his debt of gratitude to England for a number of years spent at Oxford. No one blamed him greatly for that; but no one expected him to continue in the same vein. Later, he published a supposedly impartial article in the *American Historical Review,*[13] in which he main-

[12] Princeton University Press.
[13] "Triple Alliance and Triple Entente, 1902-1914," *A.H.R.*, Vol. XXIX, April 1924, pp. 449-473.

tained that the two groups of Powers stood "face to face" in 1914, so that a conflict was practically inevitable. The article pleased most critics though it was clear that the conclusion that the Alliances were equally balanced neglected altogether the weakened state of the Triple Alliance in general and of Austria-Hungary in particular.

He soon left his mid-way position, however, jumping from one side of the fence to the other in a most bewildering fashion. The story of his vacillations during the years 1924-1926 has been well told by Professor H. E. Barnes, in his "In Quest of Truth and Justice."[14] Finally, Professor Schmitt was caught in a hopeless tangle.

Laboring under the necessity of deciding for or against revisionism he let his prejudices have full sway in *Foreign Affairs* for October, 1926. And in 1927, in *Current History*,[15] he displayed at length the pro-British bias which has characterized his later work.

Here he was reviewing the British documents on the crisis of 1914. His eagerness to defend Grey's record without thought of balanced judgment and his carelessness of statement when whitewashing the British foreign office made his review scandalously unhistorical. For example, he is comparing the British publication of documents in 1914 with the full collection of 1926. Does he note the numerous falsifications, omissions and perversions of fact of the

[14] pp. 298-331.
[15] March, 1927, pp. 844-851.

1914 publication? Yes, he notes some of them at least, because he defends them, accepting the rather naïve explanations of the notoriously prejudiced editor, Headlam-Morley. But his conclusion is that the British "paraphrasing" of 1914 "was honestly done. Only once (so far as the writer has noted) was the meaning changed, and then, apparently, by a slip." "No documents were falsified."[16]

That, one suspects, is Professor Schmitt in his most typical manner—as far from plain, obvious unmistakable truth as he could be, for the documents were doctored in numerous places. Dimly aware of the thin ice he is skating on, he seeks to excuse himself by the qualifying phrases "as far as the writer has noted" and "apparently." Now the documents were either falsified or not falsified, and no qualifying phrases can relieve an author from responsibility for a judgment that is so far removed from demonstrable fact.

When he came to review Professor Fay's two volumes on the "Origin of the World War" he lost all sense of proportion. He misquoted Professor Fay's statements, he vied with M. Renouvin of France in asserting that several matters given full treatment in the book were omitted, and he went beyond that into certain wild hypotheses that, on investigation of the documents, proved to be veritable mares' nests.[17]

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[16] p. 844.

[17] *Saturday Review of Literature*, March 3, 1929; *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. I, No. 1, March, 1929. See my criticisms in *American Monthly*, cited in note 4.

Unfortunately, the same wretched carelessness and pro-British bias distort his recent volumes. Here he has collected all the possible arguments against the German government that have been advanced by "salvagers" the world over. Most of his argument is old, discredited stuff newly dressed up in fancy historical clothes; and his own meagre contributions remind us of the phantasies of 1914. More British than the British, more sensationalist than the French, more pretentious than his fellow Americans, he strives on to outdo everyone in recklessness as well as in quantity.

IV. "The Coming of the War"

After all the anticipatory remarks about his "forthcoming" volumes, Professor Schmitt finally put them into print. They are, indeed, imposing volumes. Five hundred and thirty-nine and 482 pages of text testify to the minuteness of research and extensiveness of documentation in the volumes. The blurbs boast of ten years of research, examination of 35,000 documents, multitudinous footnotes and startling conclusions.

The advertisements then get in their deadly work with statements like these: "It is a full, exhaustive, critical study of one of the most controversial periods of modern history"; "The book is the fullest account in any language of the immediate origins of the war." The reviewers swell the chorus with statements like these: "This book is, without question, one of the major achievements of American histori-

ans"; "Truly, it is a remarkable piece of work, a masterpiece of erudition and reasoned interpretation"; "Both style and reasoning are superb"; "It is, then, thorough. It is also clear and readable. And it is sane and essentially sound"; it is the "last word" on the subject.

Such is the verdict of the publishers and of the majority of the reviewers.[18] Truly, this major masterpiece, so clear and so superbly convincing, so remarkable in documentation and so startling in statement,—this masterpiece should be examined in detail. The results of the examination are indeed truly *startling*.

[18]For adverse criticisms consult Barnes, H. E., in *New Republic*, Oct. 22, 1930; Lutz, H., in *American Historical Review*, April, 1931; Cochran, M. H., in *American Monthly*, Nov., 1930; Langer, W. L., in *New York Herald Tribune*, Dec. 28, 1930; Moon, P. T., in *New York Times*, Nov. 16, 1930; and especially the devastating criticisms of J. W. Swain in *The Historical Outlook*, Dec., 1930. S. B. Fay shows all the principal arguments of Schmitt to be unsound but, with strange logic, approves of the book in general; *Journal Modern History*, March, 1931, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 143-147. The most thorough and devastating critique of the book is to be found in the three minute and scorching articles by Count Max Montgelas in the *Berliner Monatshefte* (K. S. F.), Vol. IX, No. 5, pp. 429-443, May, 1931; IX, 7, 656-672, July, 1931; and IX, 8, 754-776, Aug., 1931.

CHAPTER II

Major Errors

ON examination the volumes turn out to be a "major achievement," indeed, but "major" only in size and in blunders.

Here are the major errors, to be presented in detail below, that the volumes betray:

(1) Pro-British bias sufficient to distort the most thoroughly documented account from history into apologetics. The reviewers mention it, some with great emphasis (Barnes, Swain, Moon), others with less stress (Hayes).

(2) Complete distortion of pre-war diplomacy and psychology. Professor Schmitt makes the Entente out to be peaceful, passive and honest, the Central Powers aggressive, militaristic and dishonest. Such moralizing, such prejudice, and such a lack of understanding of the real basis of diplomacy destroy the claims of the advertisers that this is "history."

(3) A caricature of the important days July 5th and 6th, an account which includes rumor, suspicions, guesses, phantasies of every sort to bolster up a ridiculous case and dodge the obvious facts in the documents.

(4) A ludicrous attempt to push the "decision for war" back before the Russian general mobilization.

(5) A distorted judgment of the Austrian ultimatum and the Serbian reply.

(6) Distortion of Grey's motives in making the peace proposals from the fact, the interests of the Entente, into sheer pacifism.

(7) A preposterous account of events in Berlin on July 30 where appear all the errors of the book—suspicion, bias, speculation, the use of ridiculous sources, the distortion even of these and the evasion of the most elementary, best authenticated facts. Compare Professor Moon's review.

(8) The complete evasion of the real issue in Russian mobilization, especially in the conclusion.

(9) Utter neglect of important new documents contained in the 1927 edition of the Kautsky Documents.

(10) In general, the frequent occurrence of about every sin against historical method that it is possible to name, including mistranslations, misquotation, misplacing of evidence, "sheer speculation" (Schmitt), exaggeration of statements from the positive to the comparative and then to the superlative degree, etc.

CHAPTER III

False Methodology

IN his frantic efforts to convict Germany, Professor Schmitt mistranslates the documents and warps them out of their natural order and interpretation. Nearly every one of the blunders in handling documents leads to misinterpretation in a sense unfavorable to the Central Powers. In not a single case is a document mistranslated to give a more favorable view of the acts of the Central Powers. His methodology, in other words, is warped as a result of his unhistorical purpose—to salvage what he can of the wreck of Entente mythology.

I. Mistranslations

One qualification an historian worthy of the name must have is the ability to translate with absolute fidelity from the foreign languages he needs to use. No work based on inaccurate translations can claim to be history, particularly in the case of documents of such a controversial and minute subject as that of July, 1914. In this respect, Professor Schmitt has given ample evidence of unwillingness to be satisfied with correct translations when they interfere with his theories. It is impossible here to present all the instances of mistranslations. But of every 100 documents translated in the book that I have looked up

there are serious deficiencies in 95. Some of them are of minor importance; many important documents are warped just enough to permit a foolish interpretation and many of them are completely distorted.

The mistranslation of *Aufmarsch* (II, 189) is a typical example of Schmitt's blundering. On the 29th of July Grey proposed that Austria should stop in Belgrade—a proposal that would have allowed Russia to continue mobilizing. Bethmann, realizing this, insisted that Grey couple with his "Halt in Belgrade" proposal an arrangement to prevent Russian concentration on the Austrian frontier. He telegraphed London that Grey must prevent "Russian *concentration (Aufmarsch)* on the Austrian border" (K. D., 409, July 30th, 11:30 A.M.). Grey agreed (K. D., 435), changed his "Halt in Belgrade" proposal and suggested to Russia directly that, if Austria stopped in Belgrade, Russia should consent to "suspension of further military preparations" (B. D., 309, July 30th, 7:30 P.M.). In other words, Bethmann induced Grey to change his one-sided proposal of July 29th into a real peace proposal on the 30th, that would have checked both Austria and Russia.

But in "The Coming of the War" these plain facts are warped beyond recognition. *Aufmarsch* (concentration) is translated "advance"[1] and interpreted to mean "attack" in the next line. Thus Schmitt has Bethmann asking Grey to prevent a Russian attack on Austria when Bethmann really asked him to pre-

[1] The Carnegie translation has "advance."

vent Russian concentration, an advanced stage of mobilization, on the Austrian frontier. Then Schmitt declares that Bethmann "dared not tell Sir Edward Grey that he was asking Russia to stop mobilizing." This is an absurd statement because the "Halt in Belgrade" proposal, as amended by Bethmann, implied that both Britain and Germany should ask Russia to stop mobilizing. Moreover, Bethmann had been complaining to Britain about Russian military preparations from the 26th of July on; it is difficult to see why the British should not suppose that he had spoken directly to the Russians about their military measures. Schmitt also assumes that Bethmann did not know that Britain had an ambassador in St. Petersburg who could report to London the German efforts to stop Russia from mobilizing.

The motive for Bethmann's "disingenuous" trick, as Schmitt gives it, is no less strained and absurd. Telling this to Grey "would ruin any prospects of obtaining British neutrality" (II, 189), just as though Bethmann thought the British would enter the war if they knew that Germany was asking Russia to stop mobilizing. But this motive fits in with Schmitt's general theory that Bethmann's policy was motivated chiefly by the desire to prevent British intervention rather than to prevent a European war. Hence it must be used, be it ever so absurd.

As a result of this one mistranslation, then, Schmitt makes three grievous errors: (1) he depicts Bethmann as deceitful in this matter—he "was hardly playing fair with Sir Edward Grey" (II,

189); (2) he neglects, as he has neglected elsewhere (II, 159-160, 261-262), the fact that Bethmann's suggestion changed Grey's one-sided "Halt in Belgrade" proposal into a real peace proposal; (3) and he produces another false argument to support his false theory about Bethmann's policy toward England. Prejudice, blundering and confusion could go no further than this culmination of errors based on the mistranslation of *Aufmarsch.*

But what is one to think when one finds *Aufmarsch* correctly translated elsewhere? (II, 5 and II, 59, note 4, on p. 60).

Another example. Schmitt is trying to show that Francis Joseph and William II personally exercised great influence on the policies of their governments in the 1914 crisis. Hence his chapter headings, "Hapsburg's Hour" and "Hohenzollern's Bond" (Ch. IV. and Ch. V) which tend to throw the attention of the reader from the Empires to the dynasties. Then *Monarchie-feindlichen* is translated as "anti-dynastic" when it means "hostile to the Monarchy," *i.e.,* the state (I, 318). *Erzfeind,* likewise is translated "hereditary enemy" when it means "arch enemy" (I, 348). Then in translating Szögyény's dispatch about his interview with William II on July 5, Schmitt translates *definitiv* as "definite" when it means "final." The cause of this error is his desire to prove that William II gave the answer of the German government whereas in fact the Kaiser gave only a personal opinion and expressly reserved the whole question for the decision of the Chancellor.

The facts are obscured by the translation for William II did give a "definite" answer but not the "final" one (I, 293, 295). Later, in the sensationalist statement of the anonymous pamphleteer—most dubious evidence, at best—to the effect that "They did succeed on Thursday (30 July) in half-convincing the Emperor of the unavoidable necessity" of mobilization, "half-convincing" is rendered "convincing" (II, 193). Thus is William II's rôle exaggerated.

Professor Schmitt exaggerates the willingness of the German government to support Austria-Hungary both before and during the crisis of 1914. Several mistranslations help distort the documents to fit the theory. The most disputed part of Szögyény's telegram of July 6th is translated so that Bethmann is talking to Szögyény of "an eventual action" against Serbia which "could mean only an attack on Serbia" (I, 306) when it should read, "a possible action," *i.e.*, something *un*certain. This mistranslation (elsewhere *eventuel* is also mistranslated, I, 15, 364) helps form Schmitt's whole misinterpretation that Germany and Austria considered war on Serbia as the only solution on July 5th-6th. Several other cases of mistranslation of documents relating to July 5-6 occur. The word *"hinter,"* which means "behind" is translated "at our side," thus exaggerating the rôle of the German Government (I, 305). Likewise, in trying to show that the Szögyény telegram of July 6 was accurate he mistranslates Tschirschky's statement about the "contents" *(Inhalt)* of Szögyény's

telegram as though it were "tenor" (I, 305 note). In another case where Hoyos' wild statements in Berlin are being disavowed by the Austrian government the Austrians said emphatically that they wanted it "emphasized" that Hoyos' statements were "purely *(rein)* personal." Schmitt makes "emphasized" into "understood," and omits the "purely" altogether, thus weakening greatly the force of the Austrian disavowal (I, 343). In another case even a *French* document is mistranslated because Schmitt is too anxious to show that Sazonov was willing to satisfy Austria; hence *garantis* ("will guarantee") becomes "guaranteed," a much more definite statement (II, 25). Such distortions, while small, are sufficient to alter the meaning of document after document. They are unpardonable merely as mistakes and doubly so when used to bolster up strained interpretations of documents. This is particularly true of work that is based on such minute analysis of words as appears in "The Coming of the War."

Four other cases are related to Austrian policy. When Conrad asks Berchtold about a certain plan "How do you consider that can be done?" *(Wie stellen Sie sich das vor?)* Schmitt translates it "What are you thinking of?" as though Conrad was denouncing the plan instead of asking for information (I, 273). Conrad's talk of wanting to "punish" Serbia is turned into "humiliate," the thing that the Entente would fight rather than allow (II, 182). The effect of the Austrian ultimatum on Sazonov is completely distorted in the alteration of "depres-

sion" *(Niedergeschlagenheit;* Schmitt misspells the German word) into "bowled over" (I, 495). Likewise *Energisches Eingreifen* is transformed from "energetic action" into the "application of brute force" (I, 345), a translation that Professor Langer considers "daring, to say the least" and a "sharpening of expression" "very likely to distort the meaning and thus mislead the reader."

A similar case occurs in the discussion of Serbian policy: in this case, however, the mistranslation softens the expression so as to weaken the condemnation of Serbian policy. He distorts the meaning of *agitatorische Tätigkeit,* which means "acts stirring up agitation," into "efforts to stir up agitation," thus weakening the force of the original which implied that the acts did stir up agitation (II, 74).

Another typical case relates to French policy. The German ambassador was discussing the methods by which the French government might influence Russia to be calm. The German ambassador talked of the *Modus der Einwirkung,* which means "method of influencing" and Schmitt has "form of intervention." Here again the German phrase is quoted but the mistranslation magnifies the German proposal into something quite unacceptable. The effect on the reader is to make him feel that the French government was justified in rejecting "intervention" (II, 12).

Through another mistranslation a false impression is created in regard to Italian public opinion. The question is whether a certain policy can be

defended by the Italian government "before the country." The German phrase is *dem Lande gegenüber;* Professor Schmitt translates it "in opposition to the country" (I, 410, note). Now there can be no question that Austrian policies were not popular in Italy: the new Austrian documents show that the Entente had bought up most of the Italian press. But to mistranslate that phrase is no way for an historian to prove the point.

It is interesting to see how Professor Schmitt's mistranslations group themselves about Bethmann and Moltke at places fundamental to the argument. To prove that Bethmann "now regarded war as practically unavoidable" on the 30th (II, 186), and that "his action on 30 July has to be regarded primarily from the point of view of diplomatic tactics" (II, 187), his "most conclusive" document is a telegram to Sweden *(sic)* which read, "We have reason to assume that England will very quickly" *(schnell)* intervene "in a war" (K. D., 406). This obviously means, "quickly," *i.e.,* once war has broken out, as Grey expressed it to Lichnowsky the afternoon before. But Schmitt makes "quickly" into "soon" and "a war" into "the war" (II, 187) and thus "proves" that Bethmann thought war was on the point of breaking out on the morning of July 30th. Indeed, if one does not read the original document, Schmitt's evidence is "most conclusive."

The reason for the mistranslation of *schnell,* one of the simplest of German words, is apparent when one studies his mistranslation of *heutigen* (II, 198),

an equally simple word. The truth is that Schmitt is forced to sweat blood to get evidence that Germany decided for war sometime before 4 P.M. on July 30th, when the final Russian decision for war was taken, or at least before 11:40 A.M. of July 31st when Germany learned of that decision. Now the efforts Schmitt makes are too obvious. First, he transplants the Prussian Council of Ministers from 5-7 P.M. to noon, safely ahead of 4 P.M. (II, 186, 190). Then he mistranslates *schnell* into "soon" (II, 187). Next, he misinterprets the Kaiser's letter to the Tsar (II, 188) and mistranslates *Aufmarsch* in order to show that Bethmann was deceiving Grey (II, 189). Then comes the silly Liége theory to divert the reader's attention from Moltke's telegram (II, 191), next five pages of sensationalist rumors (II, 192-196). Then there are two messages of Moltke to Conrad (II, 196-198), which were sent at 5:30 P.M. and "sometime later, probably during the night" (II, 197). But these last two things were *after* 4 P.M., the time of the Russian decision for war. Therefore, the Bavarian Military Attaché's report of 5:30 P.M. on July 30—not a good source for a careful historian—which read "If Vienna declines the German mediation proposal *of today*"—is turned into "If Vienna declines *today* the German proposal of mediation" (II, 198, Italics mine); the result of this mistranslation is to imply that the German decision was taken earlier in the day. Schmitt needs this interpretation badly in order to be able to say "This seems to indicate that the chancellor

accepted the position of the generals sometime during the afternoon." But "sometime during the afternoon" is indefinite; it does not fully prove the priority of the German over the Russian decision. Schmitt's embarrassment appears in the style of his next sentence, "But whatever the exact hour of agreement" (II, 198-199), thus dodging altogether the question of time during the fateful afternoon of July 30th when Russia decided for war. But it is interesting to note how his defective prose, chronology, translations and interpretations intervene to drag his story over the rough forbidding rock of the Russian decision at 4 P.M.!

Other mistranslations occur with disturbing frequency. Here are some examples: *Erst* ("not until") is "only" (I, 15); *Leitung* ("direction") becomes "suggestion" (I, 362); *klein* ("moderate") is "nervous" (II, 54); *zumal* ("especially since") becomes "since" (II, 71); *herbeiführen* ("bring about") is "precipitate" (II, 138); *Vorschlag* (masculine) is coupled with *es* (neuter) (II, 178, note); *Schritt* (singular) is translated "advances" as though it were plural (II, 197). This list could be extended.

One other striking fact about the numerous mistranslations is that they nearly all show an unmistakable tendency to "make the Austro-German policy seem more drastic than it really was" (Barnes). I make no pretense to having examined again *all* the documents quoted by the author, else my list would be extended almost indefinitely. But

there are enough here to show that the author has either deliberately or ignorantly distorted the documents to the detriment of the case of the Central Powers. When taken in connection with the numerous cases of mutilation of documents to be noticed next, they prove that Schmitt's prejudices lead him to mistranslate documents to fit his theories.

In view of the frequency of these important mistranslations it is curious to note the attitude of Professor Schmitt toward the Carnegie translation of the Kautsky Documents. He says that this translation is "very unreliable and sometimes misleading or incorrect"; he has therefore "made his own translations from the German originals" (I, 258, note). Now it seems strange that a writer who can be so critical of others' translations cannot hold himself to correct translations. Nor is it an adequate defence to say that in many cases of mistranslation the German original is quoted beside the mistranslation; this accentuates the unreliability of the translation and makes one feel that there must be hundreds of other mistranslations which the translator did not notice. If one is to avoid the conclusion that this writer has deliberately mistranslated the documents, one must resort for an explanation to extreme emotional prejudice.

II. Misquotations

One characteristic feature of most of the mistranslations is that they occur at critical points in the story. The same characteristic is apparent in the cases of misquoted documents. The German treat-

ment of Austria's request for support (July 5) and the activities of German military men furnish most of the cases. Again, only a few of the more typical instances can be produced here.

Consider the distortion involved in the garbling of Moltke's words in the following passage. Eckardstein, at best an unreliable guide, relates that Moltke said to him in June, 1914, "If nevertheless things do finally boil over—we are ready; the sooner, the better for us."[2] This is not a bellicose statement in any sense of the word. Yet Schmitt has Moltke saying, "The sooner things boil over, the better for us" (II, 58). Such a distortion is intolerable. It could not be due to a printer's error because the words in Schmitt are brought together from different parts of the Eckardstein statement. What happened was that Schmitt thought he saw something compromising for Moltke and the statement got into his prejudiced mind in that garbled form.

Again, take the account of the interview between Bethmann and the Kaiser at Potsdam on July 5. Schmitt is trying to show that the Kaiser dominated the situation and imposed his views on the Chancellor. Zimmermann said as much after the war, though that is not very good evidence (I, 299) and Fischer, an unreliable writer, repeats certain rumors to that effect (I, 300, note). But no amount of other evidence can excuse Schmitt's slashing of the account in Bethmann's statement that he had spoken first about the Austrian proposals. Bethmann wrote of the in-

[2]Eckardstein, *Die Einkreisung Deutschlands*, p. 184.

terview, "After I had reported on the contents of the Austrian communications, the Emperor declared . . ." Schmitt writes that the Chancellor "gave this account of the interview:

" 'The Emperor declared . . .' " Thus he introduces the interview as though the Kaiser had spoken first. Only later does it appear that the Chancellor spoke first. All this without a scrap of direct evidence that there was any difference between the Chancellor's views and those of the Kaiser! Even if there were a difference it could not be proved by slashing documents.

Take another example. Schmitt is trying to pin on Germany the responsibility for the Austrian decision for general mobilization. The evidence shows conclusively that the Austrian measure was the logical answer to Russian measures. But Schmitt must somehow transfer the responsibility to Germany. To do so he cites a statement of Berchtold quoted in Conrad to the effect that he had "received the most reassuring declaration from the most competent authority" (II, 213). That is, from Moltke. Unfortunately the statement in Conrad reads, "most competent *military* authority" (Conrad, IV, 153. Italics mine). The omission of the word "military" makes the Austrian decision rest on Moltke's telegram and implies that Moltke ruled in Berlin. "The ministers agreed then and there to order general mobilization" (II, 213-4)—just as though Russia did not exist!

Another error still further overemphasizes Molt-

ke's rôle. Schmitt is quoting a telegram from the Austro-Hungarian military attaché in Berlin (II, 197). The attaché is summarizing the words of Moltke. According to him, Moltke was saying that "Holding out through a European war offers the last chance of preserving Austria-Hungary." Schmitt omits the "holding out through" and simply says "A European war offers . . ." thus sharpening the statement radically. At best, it is doubly indirect evidence.

In the same way Schmitt twice omits the word "very" from a telegram of warning sent to Russia by Bethmann, thus weakening the warning considerably (II, 105, 134). In another case, the same thing occurs (along with a fatal mistranslation). The Austrian ambassador telegraphs his government the views of Bethmann (I, 306). If the passage is to be accepted at all—and there has been much dispute about it—it reads that Bethmann "considers *immediate action on our part* against Serbia as the best and most radical solution . . ." Schmitt omits "and most radical" and thus conveys the impression that Bethmann was imparting reckless, one-sided advice allowing no room for Austrian decisions. In the same way Bethmann's tactics with the Kaiser, to induce him not to break off negotiations on July 30th, is distorted into a conviction on Bethmann's part that war was inevitable. Bethmann tells the Kaiser, "As this telegram also will be an especially important document historically" . . . and Schmitt omits

the "also," thus stressing "this telegram" most unwarrantedly (II, 187, 188 note 1).

Space forbids mentioning more of these examples. Suffice it to say that such mistranslation and slashing of documents occur all the way through both volumes. If these aberrations damaged the case of both sides equally one would say merely that Professor Schmitt was an incompetent historian. But, when the mistakes occur only in the reproduction of materials that are thereby rendered damaging to the case of the Central Powers, and are used to support extremely dubious propositions in flagrant contradiction to or in the absence of other evidence, then one must conclude that Professor Schmitt is straining the evidence to the breaking point in order to build up a case for unsound partisan conclusions.

III. Third-Rate Sources

The first point that strikes the reader in examining the sources used in "The Coming of the War" is the excessive reliance on third-rate sources to bolster up conclusions vital to the argument. Here one finds collected statements from pens of men whose accuracy and judgment have been successfully challenged again and again, along with such notoriously fabricated sources as the French Yellow Book of 1914.

The chief argument in the book, to the effect that Germany decided for war before hearing of Russian general mobilization, is based partly upon an obscure report from the Bavarian *military attaché* in Berlin (II, 198-199). This report, dated at 5:30 P.M. on

the 30th, gives no source of information; it contains a *political prediction* by a subordinate military man who was not in touch with the foreign office. It was sent at the very hour that Bethmann was proclaiming his triumph over Moltke to the Prussian Council of Ministers.[3] But Schmitt erroneously places this Council at noon (II, 190-191) and concludes that the Bavarian military attaché's report "seems to indicate that the chancellor accepted the position of the generals sometime during the afternoon" (II, 198). Well, at 7 P.M. the Kaiser received from Bethmann the draft of a telegram to be sent to Francis Joseph[4] urging him to give an early answer to the "Halt in Belgrad" proposal. And at 9 P.M. Bethmann sent off a long, vigorous dispatch to Vienna for the same purpose (K. D., 441). These dispatches not only *seem to indicate* but *do* indicate that Bethmann did not surrender to the generals "sometime during the afternoon." But in Schmitt's account two unmistakable documents and Bethmann's own statement in the Council are rejected in favor of the mistranslated statement of the Bavarian military attaché.[5]

In the same way four much-disputed dispatches of the unreliable Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, Szögyény, are accepted almost without question and used as the basis for far-reaching conclusions (I, 304-307, 316-318; II, 3 and 72-74). In the first case there is abundant evidence, including the German

[3] K. D., new ed., 456, note 2.
[4] K. D., 437, note 2.
[5] See also above, pp. 24-26.

chancellor's account of the German policy, in contradiction to Szögyény's. In the fourth case, the evidence against the Szögyény report is overwhelming;[6] Jagow denies that he said any such thing as Szögyény reported and the Szögyény telegram itself contains so many contradictions and impossibilities that no careful historian would accept it without great reluctance. Besides, Szögyény was an old man, about to be replaced in office, concerning whom many curious stories are told.[7] Even so biased a writer as M. Renouvin hesitates before accepting the Szögyény telegram of the 27th.[8] Not so Professor Schmitt—with the aid of two mistranslations[9] he manages to accept the first—and he accepts the telegram of the 27th after a half-page of argumentation (II, 73). In another case a dispatch of the same unreliable Szögyény is used as the chief basis of judgment as to "The Calculations of Berlin" on July 6th (I, 316-318) and another time for "proof" that Berlin was egging Austria on to war (II, 3). In all four cases, Szögyény's sources of information are seriously in doubt. For the first, the Austrian Ambassador gives the chancellor as the source and then goes on to say, obviously in a more reckless tone, "in the further course of conversation, I learned," leaving the source question up in the air.[10] But this is just the part, the unreliable part, that Schmitt makes so

[6] See below, pp. 218-219 and note 56.
[7] See Wegerer, "Widerlegung . . ." pp. 104-106, Amer. Ed., pp. 160-163.
[8] Renouvin, "The Immediate Origins of the War," pp. 131-135.
[9] See above, pp. 21-22.
[10] Schmitt's incorrect version is "In the course of further conversation . . ."

much of after mistranslating one word and omitting one phrase (I, 306). The telegram of the 27th gives Jagow as the source, but he denies having said any such thing (II, 72-74). The third gives no definite source of information (I, 317-318) and the fourth gives "here," "people here" (II, 3), "the foreign office" (I, 526). From such unreliable witnesses deriving information from such uncertain quarters comes the "evidence" for "The Coming of the War."

For the Bavarian representatives as sources Schmitt, like Renouvin, seems to have a special fondness. Wenninger, the military attaché in Berlin, appears four times as a witness against the German government's policies on July 29th and 30th (II, 136, 145, 192, 198), with no reference at all to the dispute that has arisen over the value of his reports[11] or to the fact that he consulted neither the foreign office nor the general staff but merely subordinate officials in the war office.[12] Lerchenfeld, the Bavarian minister in Berlin, appears more often, twice at critical points in the story (II, 52 and 210). The second of these references to Lerchenfeld (II, 210) is one of the chief supports of Schmitt's "proof" that the German government decided for war on the 30th. Likewise Schoen, the Bavarian *chargé d'affaires* in Berlin early in July, does duty as chief addition to Szögyény in the account of German mo-

[11] *Kriegsschuldfrage*, V, 1107-1125, Nov., 1927. On the Bavarian representatives' reports and on German policy toward Austria before July 28th Schmitt's account is remarkably similar, in phraseology and judgment, to that part of Lutz's report to the Reichstag that was finished in 1928.

[12] K. D., new ed., Anhang IV A, 2.

tives on July 5-6th (I, 319-320).[13] Even the Bavarian minister in Vienna is allowed to testify four times (I, 363, 372, 389, 456).

Now these Bavarian representatives did not have access to the highest political authorities either in Berlin or Vienna. In Berlin they talked with Zimmermann or lower officials; neither Wenninger nor Schoen talked with the Chancellor or Jagow during the crisis of 1914 and Lerchenfeld talked only once with the Chancellor, on July 30th, in a conference in which Bethmann merely reproduced what he had said at the Council of Prussian Ministers.[14] Lerchenfeld's sources of information were "Szögyény and some gentlemen" (June 29, Dirr, p. 114); "In the foreign office here one hopes" . . . (July 2, Dirr, p. 118); Undersecretary of State Wahnschaffe (July 28, Dirr, p. 154; Schmitt, II, 52); Minister of State Delbrück (July 29, Dirr, p. 158); no source stated (July 29, Dirr, pp. 158-159); the Chancellor (July 30, Dirr, pp. 163-164); "influential circles in Berlin" (July 31, Dirr, p. 169); no source stated (July 31, Dirr, p. 170, Schmitt II, 210); no source for political parts and "months before Moltke expressed himself" for the views on Moltke (July 31, Dirr, pp. 175-176; Schmitt, II, 58).

The Bavarian reports, then, were not based on information from the heads of the government in Berlin. Particularly those reports upon which Schmitt relies the most (II, 52, 58, 198, 210) were not based

[13] Part of Schoen's information came from Szögyény.
[14] Dirr, pp. 163-164.

upon information from the responsible authorities. They were based on the words of Wahnschaffe, on a statement of Moltke's made "months before" and on no definite source. The judgment of an unbiased historian would be that these were third-rate sources, to be used with caution and never made the basis of important arguments.

Professor Schmitt's method is well illustrated in his handling of Schoen's report of July 18 (Dirr, pp. 4-13; Schmitt, I, 319-320). In the absence of Lerchenfeld, Schoen was the Bavarian *chargé d'affaires* in Berlin. His report was based, he says, upon "conversations with Undersecretary Zimmermann, with the foreign office officials in charge of affairs concerning the Balkans and the Triple Alliance and with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador . . ." (Dirr, p. 4). In certain cases he makes it clear that he is relaying the ideas of Zimmermann (Par. 3, 6, 9, 15, and part of 17). Now Schmitt quotes paragraph 6 as representing Zimmermann's views, quite correctly, so far as the report goes; but then paragraph 7, obviously not Zimmermann's, and extending over to another page not referred to, is reproduced as if it were Zimmermann's exact statement (I, 319). Another time this same report is hauled in to show what Berlin knew of the ultimatum beforehand; this time paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 11 are quoted, the first being Zimmermann's views and the second, third and fourth not necessarily his at all. Of course, all three are attributed to Zimmermann (I, 377-378). Zimmermann's denial that he made

the statements quoted in paragraph 3 (Dirr, pp. 57-58) is not mentioned. There you have it. The dispatch of the man subordinate to the Bavarian minister in Berlin, based on conversations with four different, subordinate officials, appears in support of Schmitt's suspicions as though it were based entirely on conversations with Zimmermann, who was not even in charge of affairs. All this without one glance at the reliability of these third- and fourth-hand witnesses. His only attempt at justifying his use of these assertions as sources for German policy is the feeble statement that Zimmermann "*may* have been instrumental in persuading the chancellor" (I, 319. Italics mine).

At times Schmitt seems aware of the rottenness of the evidence that he uses. For example, he relates at length a story from the British minister to Bulgaria on July 20th as to what he had heard about a report made by the Bulgarian minister in Berlin to King Ferdinand on July 7th (I, 324-325). Preposterous, inaccurate and inconsequential as this story is, Schmitt declares it "of even greater interest" than a statement of Lichnowsky to Grey on July 6th (I, 324) but then suddenly checks himself and writes, "This story . . . must not be overemphasized" (I, 325). But he has overemphasized it by giving it a full page. Unfortunately these warnings as to the bad odor of the historical garbage he has scooped up, are as infrequent as they are late.

Likewise, Lichnowsky's later writings are cited as sources (I, 287, note, 292-293, 333, 401 note and

418-419). One need not discuss the unreliability of this witness; it is too well known.

Among the many sad examples of his unquestioning acceptance of bad sources is his use of Documents 5 and 6 in the French Yellow Book of 1914 (I, 66, notes, 172, note 2). Number 5 is one of the clumsiest forgeries in a notoriously unreliable collection; in one place it even relates remarks Kiderlen is said to have made at a time when the poor man had been dead seven months. Number 6 is one of those childish French reports "from an absolutely reliable source"—unnamed, of course—about what William II and Moltke are alleged to have said to the King of the Belgians, *i.e.*, really regal gossip, even though fourth-hand. The document in question has not survived the destructive criticism leveled against it;[15] nevertheless it appeals to Schmitt.

Toward other parts of the French Yellow Book he is equally incautious, though he does state —without comment—that some of the French documents were "edited" (II, 242, note; II, 248, note; II, 299). He makes frequent use of the French Yellow Book but is relieved from using it always because so many of the telegrams have been published by Poincaré in a *second* version.

That Poincaré's material is probably only a second, not the final version, Schmitt never even suspects. He often quotes the memoirs as though they were to be rated as equal to contemporary sources,

[15] See especially Wegerer, "Die Widerlegung der Versailler Kriegsschuldthese," Berlin, 1928, pp. 34-37. American edition, 1930, pp. 48-51.

and he swallows whole two of the most palpable attempts made by Poincaré to deceive the world. In one case, where Poincaré was trying to prove that the French government had warned Russia not to mobilize, he wrote the text of a telegram of July 30 as though it were "Russia should not immediately take any step for a total or partial mobilization of her forces,"[16] whereas in reality the phrase "which may offer Germany a pretext" was omitted after "step." The two versions are quite different in meaning; Poincaré does not return to the subject until 13 pages further on, or until the reader has been completely misled. Now it happened that the correct version had already been published[17] and Poincaré's little trick was immediately discovered by Barnes, Montgelas and others. He explained that it was "a printer's error" and Professor Schmitt accepts this too, too thin explanation (II, 232, note).

In another case, Poincaré declared that the British proposal for a direct understanding between St. Petersburg and Vienna "would be dangerous" (July 21). What he was doing was shattering one of the first plans of preventing trouble in Europe, obviously in the interests of Entente solidarity, which meant a great deal on account of their tremendous military superiority. But Schmitt unquestioningly accepts Poincaré's explanation and writes, "M. Poincaré seems to have feared that such a conversation

[16] Poincaré, IV, 385-6. One looks in vain for a reference to the fact that Poincaré used falsified documents in his lectures and book of 1921; nor does one find reference to the book of August Bach on Poincaré, a book which Schmitt must have used.

[17] Br. Doc., XI, No. 294; F. Y. B., 101.

might prejudice mediation by the Concert of Europe" (I, 451) and as a reference merely gives, "Statement of M. Poincaré to the writer" (I, 451, note). In spite of all of Poincaré's falsification of documents, then, he is still good enough a witness for Schmitt.

Another discredited source Schmitt does not hesitate to use is Dr. Mühlon (I, 303). That source is triply suspect for the following reasons: (1) Mühlon has been shown to be a very nervous and unreliable person. (2) The letter quoted by Schmitt has been shown to be grossly inaccurate in at least five of its main contentions. (3) Dr. Mühlon relates what was said to him on July 17th about a conference on July 5th by Krupp, who saw the Kaiser on July 6th. Thus it is fourth-hand and non-contemporary. Now these facts were published in 1918 and have been republished many times, especially by Dr. Wegerer in 1928.[18] How can Schmitt dare refer to the three different printings of this scandal without mentioning the heavy indictment of it? (I, 303, note).

One of the sections in Chap. XIII is entitled, "To fight the business through" (II, 62-68). The quotation can be found in Zwehl's life of Falkenhayn and is based on a note in Falkenhayn's diary which says that Falkenhayn "learned *unter der Hand*" that at a conference at Potsdam on the afternoon of July 27th the decision was taken "to fight the business through, cost what it might." No authority is cited,

[18] "Widerlegung," 1928, pp. 31-33; American ed., pp. 37-40.

simply the General learned *"unter der Hand."* Someone heard from someone who told Falkenhayn who put it into dramatic, military form in his diary, whence Zwehl extracted it and Schmitt makes a whole section out of it. Such fourth-hand evidence is his forte. The more indirect the better, is his rule. British minister to Bulgaria-Someone-General Markhoff-King Ferdinand (I, 324-325); or Conrad-Metzger-Francis Ferdinand-William II, and Conrad-Francis Joseph-Francis Ferdinand-William II (I, 169); or Mühlon-Krupp-William II-Bethmann (I, 303); Cambon-Someone-Moltke-King of the Belgians (I, 66)—of these Schmitt is particularly fond. But the Falkenhayn story is the best because the ultimate source is not stated—hence it is used as a heading for the section. And there is practically no other information about the conference proceedings (I, 62).[19]

To maintain that strained interpretation, Schmitt is forced to maltreat the documents giving German policy on the evening of July 27th. First, he cites the refusal of Jagow to agree to let the four powers exercise pressure on Vienna; and neglects to point out that this conforms to Germany's attitude of the 26th (II, 64); then he quotes Szögyény (II, 64); next he perverts a plain clear document into its

[19] A word about the translation. The German is, *die Sache durchzufechten*, which can be literally translated, "to fight the business through." But Falkenhayn was a military man reporting gossip about a political decision. The true meaning of the phrase—if it has any—is to continue the policy, *i.e.*, of localization. There was no war on at that time and the telegrams that were sent out in the evening show that German policy had not been changed. To speak then, of "fight the business through" is simply to make a quite doubtful statement into a thriller.

opposite (II, 64-65). The document was Pourtalès' account of Sazonov's willingness to talk directly with Vienna, which was transmitted to Vienna with certain omissions. The omissions, says Schmitt, prove the "duplicity" of Herr von Jagow, because they contained "the essential feature of the Russian proposal" (II, 65). This is simply an impossible interpretation, "the essential feature" was the proposal for direct negotiations; the omitted section contained a garbled story of Russia agreeing to advise Serbia to accept—after Austria and Russia had negotiated. The point here, and the chief reason why it was omitted, was that it implied the Russian right to interfere in an Austro-Serbian dispute and to dictate Serbian policy. Such a proposal would never meet the approval of Austria. It was therefore omitted by Berlin. That the omitted part was not the "essential feature" of the proposal is apparent from Sazonov's own telegram sending the proposal to Vienna; he omitted the same part as Berlin—a fact that was pointed out in a reply to Schmitt two years ago.[20] To quote the German and not the Russian interpretation and then draw conclusions as to Jagow's duplicity is too much.

But all this is necessary to maintain the "fight the business through" nonsense that Falkenhayn learned "unter der Hand" from heaven knows whom. How hard Schmitt has to strain in order to put over his foolish interpretation is shown by the extravagance

[20] Russian Orange Book, No. 25. Schmitt has already overemphasized the guarantee by the mistranslation of *garantis* into "guaranteed" (II, 25).

of the language which culminates in the sentence, "But the duplicity of Herr von Jagow reveals once more the anxiety of the German government lest Austria-Hungary find some excuse for not taking the final plunge to which Berlin was frantically urging her" (II, 65).

How pointless is the whole story of "to fight the business through" can be seen from Schmitt's confession that "Late, very late, on the evening of 27 July, the attitude of the German Chancellor underwent a certain change" (II, 68). The telegram showing the "change" left at 11:50 P.M. (II, 70) but must have been worked up considerably before that, as the basis for the "change," three telegrams from Lichnowsky, arrived in Berlin at 4:37 and 8:40 P.M. (II, 69). But the fourth proof of the "fight the business through" story overlaps this "change" as the telegrams to Vienna and Rome left as late as 9, and 10 P.M. (K. D., 267; 273). To keep the artificial distinction between the afternoon and "late, very late" that evening Schmitt just neglects to insert the time of departure of these telegrams to Vienna and Rome (II, 65, note, 66, note). The citation of the times would wreck his theory. He must prove something about the "duplicity" of Jagow.

To such extremities do Schmitt's bad sources lead him. In the case of General Conrad's elaborate apology, Schmitt fails to see the fundamental nature of the work. He falls into the same errors of method and conclusion as the General because he is more interested in convicting the Germans than in reading

Conrad critically. Not only does he fail to note Conrad's suggestions of 1907 in regard to an Austro-Russian bargain but he even fails to note the discrepancy between the different statements of the General as to when he needed to know whether Russia would intervene or not. From Conrad he derives many of his most preposterous theories, particularly the theory that the German government was ready to declare war on Russia on account of Russian partial mobilization. As these matters are explained below, there is no need to go into them in detail here except to point out that Conrad is a mixture of good and bad source material that must be handled with the utmost discretion. Professor Schmitt swallows it almost without question wherever it fits in with his theories.

In the same way, Schmitt accepts the statements of Grey in his most untrustworthy memoirs. Unlike Conrad, Grey had few papers at his disposal and made many slips in his elaborate apology. But here again Schmitt lays aside the most elementary historical principles, mingling contemporary documents with Grey's later professions of moral motives in the most uncritical fashion. Most absurd of all, he attempts to acquit Grey of lying, as though any diplomat in the world's history had always told the truth. This Grey, with the "Spirit of Locarno" vision, is a kind of saint, who never told falsehoods, who never approved of the use of Entente pressure and who loved peace for peace's sake—according to Schmitt. More of this later.

Now we come to another source which Professor Schmitt considers "conclusive" (I, 538-539) in regard to a judgment on the Serbian reply. This source is none other than William II, whom Professor Schmitt described to the Chicago Literary Club as a person who could "believe at any moment what pleased or suited him." Make your own comment.

Finally, we come to the worst source of all, Professor Schmitt himself. He writes, "if Russia were itching for an excuse to make war, as *both William II and Herr von Bethmann had asserted two weeks before the murder*" (I, 287-288, Italics mine); he has just referred to those assertions (I, 287, note) as being found in Schmitt, I, 102-103. Now turn to that place. You read that Bethmann wrote, "I do not believe that Russia is planning an early war against us" (I, 102). In other words, what Schmitt refers to is not there at all; quite the opposite.

In still another case Schmitt misquotes himself. This time he is stating that Bethmann "now reverted to his original position that Russia must not mobilize at all" (II, 188). For reference he cites Schmitt, II, p. 8 (II, 188, note). But at page 8 one finds that Bethmann's "original position" was "Preparatory military measures on the part of Russia aimed in any way *at us*" (II, 8, Italics mine). Now there is quite a difference between what Schmitt is talking about at II, 188 and Bethmann's statement quoted on II, 8. One is partial and the other general mobilization. To deny the effect of Russian general mobilization is one of the main efforts of Volume II, which has led

him astray again and again. Certainly he should try to be more critical of such unreliable sources.

IV. Misuse of Good Sources

The chief trouble with Professor Schmitt's use of bad sources is that it leads him to warp good sources to fit the theories derived from the bad. Fourth-hand stuff of uncertain ultimate origin, like "To fight the business through," leads to all kinds of perversions of good sources (II, 62-8). The Bavarian military attaché's report (mistranslated) of 5:30 P.M., July 30th, leads to a conclusion that Bethmann had surrendered to the Generals in flat contradiction to the statement of Bethmann himself in the Prussian Council of Ministers at the very same hour (II, 198). Then good documents are perverted into the opposite meaning to fit the report of the Bavarian minister to Berlin (II, 198-210. For details, see below). Because Conrad mentions Russian general mobilization only incidentally in his account of July 31st, Schmitt disregards mountains of evidence showing that Germany was worried about general mobilization (II, 135, 147-151, 191, 198-199, etc.). In one case a German refusal to send an ultimatum to Russia is perverted into "proof" that the German government had decided for war on the 30th (II, 199) and "to force the situation" (II, 201).

Consider the wholesale misinterpretation of Tisza's attitude in the Austrian Ministerial Council of July 31st. According to the records (A. R. B., III, 79) Tisza said, "It is a question whether it is at all

necessary to acquaint the powers with our new demands now"—But Schmitt insists that Tisza said "they should formulate 'new demands on Serbia'" (II, 218, 219). In fact, the "new demands" were hinted at by Stürgkh, as shown by the paragraph preceding the one containing Tisza's remarks, and had actually been formulated the day before by Conrad, Francis Joseph, and Berchtold, and are so described elsewhere in Schmitt (II, 183). There follows in Schmitt the statement that Tisza wanted to "reserve the right to communicate" the new demands to the Powers (II, 218) as though Grey had not already suggested something of the sort to Lichnowsky[21] on July 29th. No, Tisza's remarks must be misinterpreted so that Schmitt can follow up with the remark—"which shows how little the Austro-Hungarian statesmen cared about avoiding a European war" (II, 218). Count Tisza's "scheme for imposing new demands" (II, 219) on Serbia was, then, not his at all and consisted of the demand that Serbia should pay the costs of the Austrian mobilization (II, 183), nothing so radical or mysterious as Schmitt would make out of it.

Another abuse of good sources evident in "The Coming of the War" is misplacement of evidence in disregard of logic and chronology.

One of the worst examples occurs early in the book (I, 30-32) where Schmitt is trying to prove that German manœuvres caused the strengthening of the Franco-British Entente. A study of the German

[21] B. D., XI, 284, 285; K. D., 368.

manœuvres, however, shows that they came *after* the strengthening that Schmitt cites. The causes (1) "demand for the dismissal of" Delcassé, May 2 and 30, 1905 (I, 30, note); (2) "threats of war" *(sic)* June 1, 11, 22, 26; (I, 30, note); and the Björkö treaty of July 24, 1905 (I, 31) produce the results on April 22nd and May 17th (I, 32-33). To such inverted chronology must Schmitt resort in order to saddle Germany with the blame for the strengthening of the Entente.

I have cited above another lapse in chronology, achieved by the simple method of leaving out the hour when the dispatches were sent out from Berlin on the evening of the 27th (II, 65-66, notes).

Still another case of misplaced evidence can be found in his account of French military measures on the 29th of July (II, 226). In a desperate attempt, characterized by most perverted logic, to whitewash France for her excessive military preparations he declares that the news of Russian partial mobilization was communicated by Izvolski at 11:15 A.M., *i.e.*, before it was actually ordered. What Izvolski communicated at 11:15 A.M. was the news that Russia would mobilize, not the actual fact of mobilization.[22] "The Russian action," then, is placed ahead of time in order to justify the military measures of the French, who had gone "apparently, farther than the Germans" (II, 226).

Two other errors in chronology need to be noted

[22] See Br. Doc., XI, No. 258, enclosure 2. The version quoted in Poincaré, IV, 373 differs slightly.

here. The one, placing Szögyény's *demarche* on July 29th in the morning merely in order to fit his theory that the *demarche* influenced the German Government (II, 133-135); and the other, placing the Prussian Council of Ministers at noon on July 30th instead of at 5-7 P.M. (II, 190-191). Both cases again show an unmistakable tendency to put material out of its chronological place in order to "prove" theories.

In the arrangement of material, too, occur frequently very curious transplantations. In the case of Austrian and Russian mobilizations the Austrian decisions of the evening of July 30th (II, 182-186) and of the morning of July 31st (II, 213-214) are described before the story of Russian general mobilization on July 30th at 4 P.M. (II, 236-256). The purpose of this displacement, doubtless, is to work in before Russian general mobilization the German "decision for war" which Schmitt places about 11-12 P.M. of July 30th (II, 199) as well as the Austrian general mobilization. The correct order is (1) decision for Russian general mobilization (4 P.M., July 30); (2) decision for Austrian general mobilization (morning, July 31); (3) decision for French mobilization (morning August 1) and (4) decision for German mobilization (afternoon of August 1).[23] Some idea of Schmitt's application of chronology to his narrative can be gained from the fact that he discusses these decisions in the following

[23] The index (II, 501) erroneously places the decision for German general mobilization at II, 262-263, whereas only "threatening danger of war" was decided on on the 31st.

order: 2—1—4—3 (II, 213-214, 236-256, 323, 334). It is no wonder, then, that he couples the Russian and Austrian general mobilizations together (II, 256). This is the more amazing because in his criticism of Barnes' book Schmitt held that the historian of July, 1914, must pay sharp attention to the minute by minute sequence of events in all the European capitals.

As for displacement of facts nothing can surpass Schmitt's treatment of the events of 1908-1909. The formation of the Triple Entente (I, 27-29) is placed *after* the Conrad-Moltke letters (I, 14-18) which were the result of closer coöperation between Germany and Austria caused by the Entente. "Real impulsion to the Triple Entente was first given by the Balkan Crisis of 1909-1909" (I, 40; should be "1908-1909"). The "proof" is certain statements of the desire for closer coöperation between England and Russia (I, 43) that were nowhere near so vigorous as the statements made at Reval *before* the Bosnian crisis in July, 1908 (I, 39-40). Then, presumably to show how closely the Entente had been knit by the events of 1908-1909, he tells of the Franco-German agreement of 1909 (I, 44) and the Russo-German agreement of 1910 (I, 44).

The rôle of Izvolski in the crisis of 1908-1909 is treated in a very curious manner. Few could object to Schmitt's treatment in one place (I, 85) where a fair, short account of the Buchlau bargain is given. But the whole crisis of 1908-1909 is treated twice (I, 40-43; 122-129) before it becomes apparent, in

a footnote, that Izvolski broached the matter to Aehrenthal (I, 126, note). Leaving to the end Izvolski's share in the annexation simply distorts the Austrian action into a one-sided, aggressive affair. One must agree with Dr. Barnes that mention of Izvolski's initiative cannot be left to the end of the story of 1908-1909. Here a curious error creeps in: "The first suggestion of the annexation in any published document," writes Schmitt, "occurs in a memorandum of the Russian government presented to the Cabinet of Vienna in July, 1908" (I, 126, note). But Schmitt has apparently neglected to read the new Austrian documents carefully because they show that the matter of the annexation was suggested by Burian on April 1, 1908.[24] Conrad also refers to five reports and conversations about the annexation from November 19, 1907 on.[25] Now if Schmitt had read the Austrian documents and Conrad carefully how could he have missed these *six* references to the annexation, *five* of them in his beloved Conrad? All were earlier than July, 1908.

And so it goes throughout the book. Grey's absurd statement about the Austrian ultimatum, made for diplomatic purposes, is dragged in on the very first page (I, 1). Wiesner's report from Serajevo that arrived on July 13th in the late afternoon[26] is placed not where it belongs (I, 356) before the conversion of Tisza, but six pages further on (I, 362) in the discussion of the decisions of July 19th. Be-

[24] Ö.-U. A., I, No. 40, p. 47.
[25] Conrad, I, 77; I, 518-519, Anlage 9; I, 516, Anlage 8; I, 524; I, 528.
[26] Ö.-U. A., VIII, p. 436.

sides, the Wiesner report is here handled in the same infamous way the Versailles committee handled it, namely, with the emphasis on the least important part. To defend the Serbian government Schmitt says that its statement that it had no "constitutional and legal means" of controlling the vicious Serbian press "was true" (I, 461) and 15 pages further on (I, 476, note) appears Berchtold's statement that the Serbian government had actually suppressed newspapers in 1905, 1907 and 1910. As for Giesl's notation that the Serbian government suppressed newspapers for extreme utterances on July 24th, at the very time the Serbian government was working up its reply, it simply does not appear.[87]

In the same way, Schmitt hauls in his theory that Bethmann would probably be forced for "strictly military reasons, to declare war on Russia on 1 August" (II, 167-168) before his discussion of Bethmann's six telegrams on the night of July 29-30 "urging the Austro-Hungarian government to negotiate with Russia" (II, 168-171). Later, after all kinds of foolish suppositions as to the reasons for Moltke's anxiety to effect military preparations on July 30th—one time it is Liége (II, 191), another time it is fear lest Austria would not order general mobilization (II, 208), another time it is William II's desire (II, 198), another, Russian partial mobilization (II, 199)—after all this he finally admits that the proclamation of "threatening danger of war" was "the logical reply to the military meas-

[87] See Ö.-U. A., VIII, No. 10577; A. R. B., II, 8.

ures which Russia was taking in Poland and the Baltic provinces" (II, 211). In these two discussions, then, wild speculation is thrown in arbitrarily *before* Bethmann's peace efforts of July 29-30th and indispensable information about Moltke's attitude is placed long *after* several erroneous interpretations of his attitude.

Typically distorted is his placement of the Liége-Belgium story. A sudden attack on Liége had been planned in case war broke out. Schmitt hauls it into his account of July 26th (II, 59-60) when the ultimatum was first drafted and of July 29th (II, 149-153) along with much of the text of the ultimatum to Belgium instead of putting it on August 2-3 (II, 388-390) when it was presented and became important. There is no evidence that this plan for seizing Liége influenced Bethmann's decisions from July 26th to 31st in any way. The matter was not even mentioned in the Prussian Council of Ministers on July 30th, as the author admits (II, 191). For the military men, it would be significant only in case of war, and Schmitt's only evidence that the military men were affected by Belgian preparations for resistance is five lines in the report of the general staff on July 29th (II, 151; K. D., 372), in which French preparations receive 19 lines and Russian 28 lines. Of course, in the absence of evidence, sensationalist stories like the Liége business must be displaced to attain importance.

In glaring contrast to this preoccupation with German plans in regard to Belgium one finds the

Anglo-Belgian military negotiations placed in the footnotes (I, 14, note; I, 34, note; I, 47, note; II, 384, note).

Sometimes Professor Schmitt is forced to split his discussion of particular topics in order to arrive at two opposite conclusions. For example, in dealing with the Anglo-Russian negotiations for a naval convention in 1914 he has the German government accepting Grey's dishonest denial (I, 52, note) and then he affects surprise that the German government hoped for British neutrality when it did *not* accept Grey's denial (I, 323-324).

Below, and above, numerous cases of the distortion of good evidence to make it fit in with bad sources can be found. Suffice it to say here that when Schmitt desires to work up some theory he forgets all about considerations of time, place, logic and reliability of sources.[28]

[28] Professor Schmitt continually warps documents by quoting the parts he wants without regard to the sentence and paragraph structure of the original. This is an intolerably inaccurate procedure and, if it is to be copied by historians in the future will lead to continuous misrepresentation.

CHAPTER IV

The *Bordereau*[1]

SCHMITT'S gothic edifice boasts several flying buttresses, none of them firmer than plaster. For British and Entente policy, Grey's extremely unsatisfactory memoirs provide support for the fragile argument; for Austro-German policy, Conrad's memoirs—misinterpreted by Kanner and mistranslated and misinterpreted by Schmitt—do service as a kind of infallible authority from which Bethmann's policy is deduced by speculation and thence rounded out by mistranslating and misinterpreting the other documents. That Conrad's memoirs, like Grey's, constitute an elaborate apology never seems to occur to Schmitt. For him, just as Grey's "good faith is not open to doubt" (II, 42) so Conrad is an "invaluable and incorrigible witness" (I, 350-351).

Conrad's memoirs[2] contain many authentic documents, many none too trustworthy conversations and much quite unreliable reasoning. Neither Schmitt nor Kanner, whose illogical and inaccurate interpretation of Conrad Schmitt copies and fills out, realizes the dangers inherent in such mixed material. After

[1] In the Dreyfus case, *"Bordereau"* was the name applied to the artificial set of hieroglyphics derived from the writing on certain torn documents and then applied to Dreyfus' handwriting. In fact it fitted neither.

[2] "Aus Meiner Dienstzeit," 5 vols., Vienna, 1922-1926.

copying most of Kanner's errors and adding quite a few of his own, particularly in translation, Schmitt makes the basis of his account of Austro-German policy Kanner's *bordereau*-like theory.[8] According to this theory, the Conrad-Moltke letters of 1909 changed the Austro-German *casus foederis* so that if Austria attacked Serbia and Russia intervened with partial mobilization against Austria, Germany was bound to mobilize and declare war on Russia. Hitherto, the story goes, Germany had always restrained Austria from action in the Balkans; but in 1909 Moltke, with the knowledge and approval of the political officials, bound Germany to armed support of aggressive Austrian action in the Balkans. If Russia then mobilized against Austria alone, Germany was to mobilize at once and declare war. The Austrian invasion of Serbia causes Russian partial mobilization which in turn causes German mobilization and a European war—that is the *bordereau,* the "key to the war guilt question" (Kanner).

The *bordereau* carries with it all kinds of implications, including the stock arguments of Entente propagandists during the war. If the *bordereau* be fitted to German policy, then German policy can be said to have been dictated by military men (Kanner, pp. 13, 23; Schmitt, I, 16, 18, II, 168, etc.); the *casus foederis* can be said to have been extended in an aggressive sense (Kanner, p. 23; Schmitt, I, 18, 305 note); and German policy, controlled by a

[8] "Der Schlüssel zur Kriegsschuldfrage," Munich, 1926. 88 pages. *Der Krieg,* 1928-30. Schmitt gives Kanner little or no credit.

secret military agreement, can be said to have been forced to culminate in a (somewhat mysterious) "decision for war" on the basis of Russian partial mobilization on July 30th (Kanner, p. 40; Schmitt, II, 199).

Since the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt theory has been heavily attacked[4] Schmitt is forced to be very careful in his statements about it. He says that the letters "constituted in effect, though not in name, a military convention" (I, 17) than which "nothing could be more specific" (I, 18); while the convention "did not necessarily commit the German government to an invasion of Serbia," that "policy entered into the calculations of the German government" "after 1909" (I, 17) and "if it agreed to an attack, it had bound itself to accepting the risk of a war with Russia" (I, 18). This is extremely cautious, not to say evasive, language. How little it means can be seen from the consideration that if Germany agreed to let Austria attack Serbia—before or after 1909—she would automatically assume the "risk of war with Russia," letters or no letters.

Elsewhere, quite characteristically, the implications of the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt theory appear in full vigor. After dodging the issue in his general account (I, 14-18) he makes the theory the very basis of his account of German policy (I, 305, note, 371, note 2; II, 9, 78-82, 124, 132-135, 147, 176-177, 183, 198, 199, 211, 263, 265). Kanner's

[4]See especially Fay in *A. H. R.*, XXXII, pp. 317-319, 942-946, Jan., July, 1927. *Not* referred to in Schmitt.

account is much clearer, much more straightforward and just about 1,000 pages shorter.

The arguments against the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau* theory are overwhelming. They group themselves about the allegedly un-Bismarckian extension of the *casus foederis* and about the application of the theory in 1914.

First, a word as to translation. The heart of the Moltke-Conrad-Kanner-Schmitt theory is a certain passage from Moltke's letter to Conrad of Jan. 21, 1909.[5] In these thirteen crucial lines one finds no less than four gross mistranslations that have a devastating effect upon the interpretation.[6] When Moltke writes that if Austria loses patience as a result of Serbian provocations "then there will be *scarcely anything else* left for the Monarchy to do but to march into Serbia," Schmitt has "nothing" instead of "scarcely anything else," an unwarranted sharpening of the meaning. "I believe," wrote Moltke, "that a *possible* active intervention of Russia *might not* be brought about *until* an Austrian invasion of Serbia." Schmitt changes *"possible" (eventuelles)* into "eventual," that is, he makes the Russian intervention seem certain instead of possible; he makes *"might" (könnte)* into "will," another transition from uncertainty nearer to certainty; and he makes *"not until" (erst)* into "only," with the implication that Russia would never attack Austria if Austria did not attack Serbia (Italics mine). With

[5] Conrad, I, 380; Schmitt, I, 15.
[6] In addition, *zwar* ("indeed") is replaced by "will mobilize," an unhistorical but harmless alteration.

such alterations in wording and implication, almost any one could accept Kanner's theories. But how can the poor reader accept Schmitt's hair-splitting arguments, based on the most minute analysis of words,[7] if the documents are handled so carelessly?

Another technical point. Kanner and Schmitt overlook entirely the fact that the German policy of supporting Austria in case an Austro-Serbian war broke out and Russia intervened, was caused by the encirclement policy of the Entente and dates back beyond the Conrad-Moltke letters. Schmitt discusses the letters very early in the book (I, 14-18) but does not get around to the causes of the German attitude until considerably later (I, 41). Even then Bülow is quoted as saying that "the needs, interests and wishes of Austria-Hungary must be decisive for our attitude in all Balkan questions" whereas the real reason —the attitude of the Entente—is put in the footnote. (I, 41, note 2). The distortion involved here is apparent when one considers that diplomatic history is a chain of events, all of which must be considered in their setting in time and cause. But Schmitt's procedure is to tear the Conrad-Moltke letters away from the policy that gave rise to them, and thus exaggerate their importance.

Then, after this distortion through mistranslation and misplacement, Schmitt indulges in nearly all of Kanner's arguments. As for Bismarck, and his alleged unwillingness to support Austria in case Aus-

[7] That minuteness (inaccurate, be it noted) is probably what led Schumann in his review to write, "Professor Schmitt is content to tell the story and let those quibble over it who will." *The Nation*, Dec. 31, 1930. p. 737.

tria provoked Russia by an attack on Serbia (Kanner, pp. 5-11, 24-20; Schmitt, I, 14-17) there can be no final judgment because the case never arose in Bismarck's day and no one except Kanner and Schmitt would presume to say what Bismarck would have decided in 1914. What one would like to see, however, in a study of diplomatic history like this, is an understanding that Bismarck was a diplomat, that he did not necessarily mean *everything* he said, and that his policy was based on what he considered the "vital interests" of Germany, just as was the German policy of July, 1914. Could anyone deny that an Austrian invasion of Serbia "entered into the calculations" of Bismarck? Could anyone deny that if Bismarck had "agreed to an attack" he would have "bound" himself "to accepting the risk of war with Russia"? If not, then what difference did the Conrad-Moltke letters make?

But, say Kanner and Schmitt, the *casus foederis* was changed (Kanner, p. 23; Schmitt, I, 18). Kanner thought it was permanently changed; Schmitt admits that it did not apply in the period 1910-1913 (I, 17, 134) but thinks that it did apply in 1914. (I, 305, note). What he is unable to get around is that the Austrian government, in appealing to Germany for aid in 1914, made no mention of any such Conrad-Moltke agreement and based its argument solely on the "vital interests" of Austria and Germany in the preservation of the Dual Monarchy (I, 165, 276-278, 299, 319, 373). Besides, Conrad, Berchtold and Francis Joseph were very doubtful

early in July, 1914 whether Germany would support them or not.[8] But if there were "in effect" a military convention, how could the principal Austrian statesmen be so doubtful of support guaranteed by that convention? Schmitt remarks at one place (I, 18) that "in July, 1914, General Conrad acted on the assumption that the promise held good." But Bethmann did not act on "the assumption that the promise held good" because he rejected the three Austrian *demarches* based upon Conrad's ideas (II, 124; K. D., 385; II, 204). Now if Bethmann rejected the Conrad schemes, no amount of talk about Conrad's actions can be allowed to obscure the fact that the new *casus foederis* that Kanner and Schmitt have conjured up did *not* apply to German policy in July, 1914. Hence, the *casus foederis* had not been changed.

Now for July 5-6, 1914. Schmitt's substanceless, ghostly version of the "military convention"—"if it (the German government) agreed to an attack (on Serbia), it had bound itself to accepting the risk of war with Russia"—applies here in a somewhat restricted sense. Germany agreed to any policy the Austrians should decide on, obviously something pretty vigorous, including an attack, and agreed to fight if Russia intervened. But the German government had agreed to the same thing in 1908, *before* the Conrad-Moltke letters and in the same way ac-

[8] Conrad, IV, 36-40. Characteristically Schmitt gives none of Conrad's or Berchtold's doubts that appear from these pages of Conrad. Francis Joseph's doubts are strewn out over I, 169 and I, 351. All the material belongs at I, 258-280; collected it would dispose of the "military convention" theory.

cepted "the risk of a war with Russia."[9] Bülow wrote on Oct. 13, 1908 to his ambassador in Vienna that for Berlin there existed "neither cause nor inclination to subject the action (the annexation) of our ally to criticism; rather the firm determination to stand and remain at his side in accordance with our obligations under the alliance. Even for the case that difficulties and complications arise, our ally will be able to count on us."[10] This was *before* the Conrad-Moltke letters; yet Bülow's 1908 statement about the obligations of the alliance when repeated in almost identical words in 1914 by Bethmann "affords the clearest proof of the binding character of the letters exchanged by the two chiefs of staff"—according to Schmitt (I, 305, note).[11]

The truth is that the words about the obligations of the alliance meant in both 1908 and 1914 that *Berlin* had decided that the "vital interests" of Germany required support for Austria in case of difficulties arising out of severe action against Serbia. That these decisions were un-Bismarckian or that they had anything to do with a superfluous, temporary political statement of Moltke in 1909 is too fantastic for anyone except a Grelling, a Kanner, or a Schmitt.

In the discussion of July 5-6, the meaningless Schmitt version (I, 18) of the Conrad-Moltke-Kan-

[9] Schmitt writes that the new *casus foederis* applied only "after 1909" (I, 17), thus conveniently dodging the fact that the Conrad-Moltke letters brought no change in policy.

[10] G. P., Vol. 26, pp. 160-161.

[11] "The obligations of the alliance" is a misquotation of Bethmann's words. I, 305, n.

ner-Schmitt legend thus appears in all its meaninglessness (I, 305, note). However, like other legends in Schmitt, this legend grows to tremendous proportions. Not that the Conrad-Moltke promises are mentioned by any of the participants, but that the legend is simply inflated until it dominates German policy.

The procedure of Kanner and Schmitt is very curious. They start with Conrad, state that he believed Moltke's 1909 promise binding (Kanner, p. 34; Schmitt, I, 18) and then try to "prove" that Conrad imposed his views on Berchtold and Bethmann. Conrad, assuming that Germany was bound, tries thrice (July 27-29) to get the German government to agree to warn Russia and promise Austria, that Russian partial mobilization will call forth German mobilization and war. Berchtold, so the story goes, agrees and sends the requests to Berlin. Berlin agrees absolutely according to Kanner (pp. 37-39) and according to Schmitt declines on the 28th (II, 124), agrees on the 29th (II, 135, 176-177) and in spite of *declining* on the 30th (II, 183, 204) decides for war on the basis of partial mobilization, as Conrad desired, on the same 30th (II, 199). This is rather confusing, but it shows how jolty the argument is. How preposterous it is can be seen from the fact that Bethmann rejected flatly all three requests.

To explain the reason why Conrad became so insistent (July 27-29) both Kanner (pp. 35-36) and

Schmitt (II, 78-80, 168, 184) indulge in heavy descriptions of Conrad's military difficulties. Unfortunately Kanner and Schmitt here have hit upon one of the most confusing parts of the Conrad apology, the five day plan. Conrad, desiring to shift the blame for defeat to the political authorities, declares again and again in his memoirs that the uncertainty of the political situation interfered with his military plans. In particular, if war were to be waged against Serbia alone, three armies would be sent to the south, whereas if Russia intervened, one of these armies would be sent north. It was desirable for Conrad to know as early as possible whether Russia would intervene or not, so as to know where to send this (the second) army. If the decision came before the fifth day of mobilization, according to Conrad, then the army could be sent north without loss of time; if after that, then the army would have to be sent south and reëntrained for the north; after the 16th day, it would "become more and more difficult" because this army would be engaged with the Serbians.[18]

Professor Schmitt warps this into the statement that Conrad "would have to know by 1 August," *"up to the end of the fifth day of mobilization"* (S., II, 80; K., pp. 35-36). He cites no references to this story in Conrad in the full account of the plan (II, 78-80). But if he had consulted Conrad carefully he would have found that the German phrase is *"bis zum fünften Mobilisierungstag,"* which means, "up

[18] Conrad, III, p. 585. (April 1, 1913).

to the fifth day," not "up to the end."[13] In the second place, the statements that "he had to know" (II, 131), "he would have to know" (II, 80), and that accordingly, if the "Halt in Belgrad" plan failed, "Bethmann would probably be constrained, for strictly military reasons, to declare war on Russia on 1 August" (II, 168)[14] grossly exaggerate the situation. Schmitt neglects most of the qualifying phrases that always went with Conrad's proposition. In Conrad one reads that it was "easiest" (C., III, 535); "about" up to the fifth day (C., IV, 53-55); "desirable" (C., IV, 132); "if possible" (C., IV, 267) and "if it is to accomplish its purpose" (C., IV, 139). Neither Kanner nor Schmitt grasp the fact that there were three stages in Conrad's plans for operations against Serbia. In the first stage, which in reality ended at the end of the third day of mobilization, not the fifth day as Kanner and Schmitt have it, the troops could be transported to the Russian frontier immediately; *up to the sixteenth day* they could be transported south and then north without great loss of time;[15] after that, when the troops became entangled with the Serbians, there would be great delay. But neither Kanner nor Schmitt see that the five days was really three days or that the pressing necessity for a decision would not come until the

[13]The "bis zum" phrase is used in Conrad at the following places: III, 535; IV, 53-55; IV, 132; IV, 137 ("bis" alone); IV, 151 ("bis" alone). Schmitt makes "about up to the 5th day" (Conrad IV, 54-55) into "not more than five days" (I, 371, n. 2). Kanner is more cautious, p. 35.

[14]Presumably, by "military reasons" Schmitt also meant the situation at Liége! See II, 209.

[15]Conrad, IV, 157, 321, 324.

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sixteenth day of mobilization; *i.e.*, August 12th. The purpose of Conrad's second request was to enable him to move about one-fifth of his troops north immediately, instead of waiting a few days.

The whole story of Bethmann's surrender to Conrad's military convenience looks foolish if one examines the inaccuracies and contradictions in Conrad's own account of his scheme, and if one realizes that Schmitt assumes that Bethmann and Moltke knew nothing of the confusion in the Austrian plans.

No careful historian would trust Conrad without checking up his statements. On the question as to the date when he needed to be informed of Russian will to war if he were to prevent the second army from going south, Conrad is particularly confusing. Here are some of the statements in his memoirs—"up to the fifth day of mobilization" (III, 535, April 1, 1913); "about" up to the 5th day (IV, 53-55, July 7, 1914); "immediately" (IV, 62; July 8); "up to the 4th, at the latest the 5th of August" (IV, 132, July 26); "up to August 1" (IV, 137, July 28); "before the fifth day of mobilization" (IV, 267). "Before," "up to" the fifth day of mobilization, up to the 5th of August, etc., are hardly convincing proof of Conrad's consistency. Some idea of their accuracy can be gained from the fact that the last date before the departure of that army southward turned out to be the afternoon of July 30.[16] And what can one say about his statement that the diplo-

[16] "Österreich-Ungarns Letzter Krieg" (the official history), Vol. I, p. 323, note. Conrad, IV, 301.

mats did give him "complete clarity" on the 30th? Afterward Conrad himself blamed the diplomats for not giving him certainty two days earlier, that is, on the 30th.[17] In one place he even says that the decision should have come on the 28th of July.[18] And later, on August 3, we find him writing to Moltke that the delay in transporting this army north against Russia was of no consequence.[19] In another place Conrad maintains that the second army was actually sent north "without material loss of time."[20] It is noteworthy, too, that the Austrian official history of the war says nothing definite about this time limit and merely quotes two different time limits set by Conrad on July 26th and 28th, namely August 5th and August 1, thus implying that no time limit was set.[21] Nor do the Conrad-Moltke letters, that Schmitt talks so much about, set any definite time limit.

In one case, Schmitt seems aware of the fact that Conrad's "necessity" was really a mere convenience. "If the situation were not cleared up by 1 August, the Austro-Hungarian *armies,* according to General Conrad's plan, would be so committed to troop movements toward Serbia that they could not be *quickly* transferred to Galicia" (II, 168. Italics mine).[22] Here he gives the qualification "quickly," but he jumps at once into a serious error, when he

[17] Conrad, IV, 275; 112 and 159.
[18] Conrad, IV, 303.
[19] Conrad, IV, 321.
[20] Conrad, IV, 157.
[21] "Letzter Krieg," I, 19.
[22] The idea that all the armies sent against Serbia were to be transferred to Galicia is quite erroneous; only part were to be transferred.

continues, "if Russia then attacked Austria, she would enjoy a distinct military advantage which could be offset only by the use of German troops intended for the invasion of France." For this he cites no references. The Conrad-Moltke letters make no such provision, although again and again they consider the question of what will happen if Austria gets caught by a Russian attack when considerable bodies of troops are engaged against Serbia.[23] Nor is any such plan as the transfer to the east of German troops intended for the west mentioned in either the Austrian or the German official war histories. It is true that Moltke promised on August 2 to send five divisions to the east but there is no indication that this idea influenced either Bethmann's or Moltke's plans before August 2. Conrad himself was writing that there would be no great loss of time.[24] Certainly there is no indication whatsoever that *Bethmann* had any such considerations in mind when he rejected Conrad's repeated requests.

As Schmitt cites no references for this alleged motive of Bethmann and no such thing was done or planned in 1914, why does the statement appear at all? The answer is that he needs some way to make it seem that Conrad's schemes were important to

[23] See Conrad, I, 395-396; 398-399; 633-634; II, 60.

[24] Conrad, IV, 320; IV, 321, 324. The five divisions were not sent until the Germans thought they could be spared, on August 26th. Other examples of Schmitt's misreading of Conrad are numerous. He accepts Conrad's statement that "the concentration of troops in Galicia" would be completed in 48 hours (II, 332), *i.e.*, before the troop trains started; he declares that Conrad's formula of July 28th, 1913, was an "iron-clad formula" that "was followed to the letter exactly one year later" (I, 272), although the formula was not even applied in 1914; he tries to revive the Konopischt legend (I, 169); etc.

Bethmann. But Bethmann did not follow Conrad's scheme and Schmitt's alleged reason is an imaginative suggestion of what *might* have influenced Bethmann *if he had been influenced.* Flimsy stuff of that sort can be found all through the book to support theories as far wide of the truth as the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt five day myth.

This was a wild leap, characteristic of Schmitt's method, this assumption that Bethmann's policy was dominated by Conrad's plans.[25] What did Bethmann say in reply to Conrad's proposals via Berchtold? These contained Conrad's requests based on the five day plan and the assumption that Moltke's promises of 1909 bound Germany to mobilize if Russia mobilized against Austria. Did Bethmann accept or reject them? There is the test. Conrad and Berchtold asked the German government twice to threaten Russia with mobilization in case of Russian partial mobilization. (July 28, 29.) What did Bethmann reply? "No," to the first (II, 124) and "No" to the second.[26] The third attempt, this time broader than Conrad wanted or Schmitt or Kanner realizes, also received a negative answer (II, 204). If, then, the Conrad-Berchtold requests were turned down thrice by Bethmann what reason in the world can be ad-

[25] That Moltke was influenced by them, seems clear; his memorandum of July 28-29 shows that he thought Russian partial mobilization would lead to an Austro-Russian conflict and thus indirectly draw Germany in. Bethmann, too, feared that might happen; but it runs counter to *all* the evidence we possess, to say that Conrad's plans were sure to wreck the "Halt in Belgrad" proposal and that if the "Halt in Belgrad" proposal failed then "Bethmann would probably be constrained, for strictly military reasons, to declare war on Russia on 1 August" (II, 168).

[26] K. D., 385, in a passage not cited by Schmitt, contains the rejection to the second sent to Vienna. K. D., 299, contains the rejection of the first.

duced to show that they dominated Bethmann's policy? Answer, Grey said Germany was militaristic, the Entente trumpeted it forth, and now it must be maintained by the insertion of the Conrad-Moltke *bordereau,* no matter what the documents say.

In "Penguin Isle," when the Minister of War was asked why so many thousands of documents had to be assembled to convict a Jewish officer, the answer was, "Because we have no evidence."

It is very curious to note how Kanner and Schmitt try to get around the fact that Bethmann rejected the three Conrad-Berchtold requests based on the Conrad-Moltke letters. Both Kanner and Schmitt have them hopelessly confused and misinterpreted. Even Schmitt is unable to find that the first and third Austrian requests were accepted. But he resorts to an unfortunate system of separating the requests from the rejections and gives no cross-references in the footnotes except when the rejections are being discussed. The first request appears at II, 81, its rejection at II, 124 and 132 note; the third at II, 177, its rejection at II, 183 and 204. But the second he thinks was accepted; hence the request appears at II, 132-133 and its "acceptance" immediately after at II, 135. Thus the reader is misled as to the importance of each of the Austrian requests.

Kanner confuses the first request and the second (p. 35). Like Schmitt he considers the German rejection of the second an acceptance (Kanner, pp. 35-38; Schmitt, II, 135, 176-177). For the third, Kanner gets confused and quotes part of the second

request about partial mobilization (p. 38) and hence concludes erroneously that Berchtold had sent Conrad's request on to Berlin; there is less excuse for Schmitt's similar error (II, 177). As for the third rejection, both Kanner (p. 39) and Schmitt (II, 183, 204) mention it but hurry on to other matters.

Most of the confusion seems to be over the second request—containing the five day plan—to which the German government returned a negative answer in the night of July 29-30 (K. D., 385; 12.30 A.M., July 30.)[27] The second request was delivered at an uncertain hour and received no definite answer—so far as Kanner and Schmitt can discover. Hence there is something mysterious about it and there is great room for "speculation." Let us see.

The facts are these. The *second* Conrad-Berchtold request arrived in Berlin on the morning of the 29th, but "at what hour on July 29th it was communicated to the German Government is not known" (II, 132-133). In the afternoon a memorandum containing the request was given to the Foreign Office in Berlin, some time after the German government had sent out a warning to Russia against "further continuance of Russian mobilization measures" at 12:50 P.M.[28] Then the Austrian ambassador telegraphed Vienna at 6:12 to the effect that an "early answer" had been promised him by the German government to Conrad's suggestion on the military warning and that

[27]For the first request was rejected flatly and promptly on July 28th (K. D., 299) and Schmitt can only say, feebly enough, that Berlin "tried to evade the request of Vienna" (II, 124).

[28]K. D., 342. Schmitt, II, 134. Schmitt weakens the German warning by omitting "very" from "very serious."

the German government would send out the proposal to Rumania recommended in that same Conrad-Berchtold request."[29] A second Szögyény telegram (6:13 P.M.) said that the German government had already sent out two warnings to Russia against mobilization, July 26th and July 29th.[30] Then, at 12:30 A.M. on July 30th, Bethmann telegraphed his ambassador at Vienna that Germany had explained to Russia that Russian partial mobilization "would probably call forth *Austrian* counter-measures."[31] In other words, he rejected the Austrian plan to have Germany threaten Russia and thereby promise Austria the mobilization of the German army in case of Russian partial mobilization.[32] These are the facts.

Clearly the German government had rejected the second Austrian *demarche*. Szögyény telegraphed at 6:12 P.M. on the 29th that the German government would give him an early answer; then at 12:30 A.M. on the 30th that answer is sent, not to Szögyény, but to Vienna. The answer says that Germany has explained to Russia that Russian partial mobilization would "probably call forth Austrian counter-measures," in other words, Austria is to take steps in reply, not Germany. Germany refuses to act. The second Conrad-Berchtold request, like the first and third, was rejected. The facts could scarcely be clearer.

[29] A. R. B., III, 3. The proposal to Rumania was sent out at 1:45 A.M. of July 30; K. D., 389, note 2.
[30] A. R. B., III, 4.
[31] K. D., 385. Italics mine.
[32] Schmitt refers later to the proposal to Rumania but does not quote the decisive passage. II, 164.

Now see what happens to them in Schmitt.

Schmitt actually works out an acceptance! (II, 133-135, 176-177; Kanner, p. 37). He does this by maintaining that the Austrian second request was given to the German government on the morning of July 29th, before the German warning to Russia at 12:50 P.M. This German warning is then most erroneously described as "precisely" what the Austrians, had requested (II, 135). Later, Szögyény's telegram of 6:13 P.M. is misinterpreted in the same way, to show that the German warnings of July 26th and 29th were just what Austria had asked (II, 176-177). This false procedure is heightened in effect by the removal of all qualifications from the story; whereas he originally states that the *demarche* "probably" took place in the morning (II, 133, 135), later he simply states that it was "made that morning" (II, 167); whereas he originally qualified his idea of the German acceptance by saying that "one may accordingly *surmise,* though one cannot prove, that the note (warning) was sent to Russia *partly* to give effect to the wishes of Austria-Hungary" (II, 135. Italics mine), later he simply assumes unqualified acceptance—"Count Berchtold now had the game in his hands" (II, 176-177). His course, then, leads from probability through misinterpretation and error to certainty, in flat contradiction to the documents all the way.

Consider the first point, that the Austrian *demarche* was made in the morning of July 29th (II,

133, 135, 167). The purpose of this statement is to get the *demarche* in ahead of the German warning that was sent out just after noon. Schmitt admits that the exact hour of Szögyény's verbal communication to the German government "is not known" (II, 133) but that "the probability" is that it was made in the morning because (1) Szögyény was instructed to make it "immediately" (but "immediately" means little in the case of as slow a mover as Szögyény); (2) since the memorandum reached the foreign office in the afternoon the "probability" is that the verbal report was made in the morning—in time to influence the German warning of 12:50 P.M. to Russia. This is speculation only, for it seems improbable that the German government would act on Szögyény's verbal communication before getting the memorandum which it asked for in order to understand the Austrian view clearly. Besides, Szögyény telegraphed at 6:12 P.M. that the German government would give an "early reply"; if it had complied that noon with the Austrian request, why did it not say so? And why was another reply needed? The Szögyény telegram of 6:13 P.M., apparently repeating what had been said to him when he made his verbal communication, was that the German government had already sent two warnings to Russia, the last "today," that is, before the verbal communication. Now none of these convincing counter-arguments are even considered in Schmitt. Nor do the hours when Szögyény's telegrams were sent to

Vienna or the hour when the proposal to Rumania was sent appear here (II, 133, 176).[33]

These necessary chronological checks on the theory that the request was made in the morning are omitted. Indeed, all counter-arguments, logical and chronological, are omitted from this important section; the result is that the reader gets no adequate material on the question as to when Szögyény's verbal communication was made.

All the probabilities indicate that the Szögyény verbal report was made in the afternoon and that Schmitt is in error when he recklessly places it in the morning. But if this point is not certainly an error, the next point is—that the Austrian second request of July 28th was covered "precisely" by the German warning to Russia of July 29th (II, 135).

One would think that the mere fact that the German government would talk at the same time of a warning already sent out on that day and of an "early reply" to the Austrian request would indicate to the historian that the warning and the reply were not "precisely" the same thing. Moreover, the German government accepted at once the parts of the Austrian request that dealt with the proposal to Rumania and reserved its answer on Conrad's military request, a sufficient indication that there was a difference in attitude on the part of the German government toward the two parts of the request.[34]

In spite of all indications to the contrary, how-

[33] The proposal to Rumania, with the hour of sending, appears later in another connection (II, 164, note 6).

[34] A. R. B., III, 3.

ever, Schmitt must cling to the theory that the German warning of July 29th was sent out "partly to give effect to the wishes of Austria-Hungary" (II, 135). His statement is that the "demand made upon Russia was, however, precisely that proposed by the Austro-Hungarian *demarche*" . . . . Please note, "precisely." But a glance at the documents shows that the Austrian request was for a warning against Russian partial mobilization and that the German warning was against "the further continuation of Russian mobilization measures" and was sent at a time when the German government had just received alarming news of Russian preparations for general mobilization. The German warning of July 26th was sent out for the same reason and is similarly misinterpreted to be a warning against partial mobilization (II, 9, 176, 188) although it expressly stated that it was directed against mobilization measures "aimed in any way *at us*," *i.e.* against Germany, that is, general mobilization.[35] This utter disregard of German fear of Russian general mobilization wrecks the political argument of the whole book.

The German warning of July 29th to Russia was not "precisely" what Conrad had asked for: far from it. Nor was the Szögyény telegram of 6:13 P.M. a proof that Germany had yielded to Conrad. Szögyény's telegram[36] said that Germany had warned Russia on Sunday (the 26th) that "Russian mobilization" would cause German mobilization;

[35] K. D., 219. Italics mine.
[36] A. R. B., III, 4; Ö.-U. A., VIII, p. 862, No. 10945; 6:13 P.M. July 29.

the warning of the 29th was described as a warning that "the continuation of the present military preparations" of Russia would cause German mobilization. There is no statement here, such as Conrad wanted, that Russian partial mobilization would cause German mobilization. Unlike Schmitt and Kanner, Berchtold noted the difference between Conrad's and Bethmann's views: he changed Conrad's third request from Conrad's partial mobilization into the "continuation of Russian mobilization," the German phrase.[87] The Szögyény telegram, then, cannot be interpreted (II, 176-177) as an acceptance of Conrad's second request and was not so interpreted in Vienna.

Schmitt's procedure is this. To show that Bethmann's policy was dictated by Conrad, Berchtold and Moltke, he needs to prove that the German warning of July 29th was aimed at Russian partial mobilization, as Conrad had requested. The facts that Bethmann rejected that demand expressly on the 28th and sent a negative answer to Vienna at 12:30 A.M. on the 30th do not impress Schmitt. Nor does it occur to him that Russian preparations up to that time had been preparatory to general mobilization, and that Germany had not learned of the Russian intent to order partial mobilization. He must have some argument to show that Conrad's schemes influenced Bethmann. Hence the total perversion of

[87] Kanner fails to notice this change because he quoted from the second request in discussing the third (Kanner, p. 38) but Schmitt has still less excuse for copying Kanner's error in the statement that "Count Berchtold adopted General Conrad's proposal" (II, 177).

the German warning of the 29th into *"precisely"* what Austria wanted.

But what becomes of the Kanner-Schmitt theory that the German government accepted the second Conrad-Berchtold request when one realizes that it is extremely doubtful whether the second request was made before the German warning of July 29th, that even if it had been made then the warning itself was not what Conrad wanted, that Bethmann expressly rejected the second request on the night of July 29-30, and that Berchtold himself altered the third request so as to conform to the German view? In these four crucial matters, the Kanner-Schmitt legend makes the improbability of the first into a certainty, warps the second, omits the third and blunders on the fourth. Does the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau* fit the second Austrian request and the second German rejection? Well, not "precisely."

As for Bethmann's clear rejection of the second Conrad-Berchtold request, there is no excuse for its omission by Kanner and Schmitt.[38] Bethmann's telegram (K. D., 385) contained the material about Russian partial mobilization in a version very similar to the one in the Austrian second request and then flatly stated the German action in warning Russia that Russian partial mobilization would call forth *Austrian* counter-measures.[39] The German view

[38] Kanner, pp. 37-39; Schmitt II, 135, *169*, 176. Schmitt quotes part of K. D. 385 at II, 169.

[39] Similarly in the proposal to Rumania, K. D., 389. Here Bethmann said that *"Austria* can scarcely avoid mobilizing against Russia also." (Italics mine.)

could hardly have been more clearly expressed to Vienna that Germany did not intend to enter upon Conrad's scheme of a warning to Russia that *Germany* would reply to Russian partial with German general mobilization.

But the omission of Bethmann's rejection of the second Conrad-Berchtold request not only gives room for the Kanner-Schmitt speculations as to the application to German policy of the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau,* but also enables Schmitt to say that the request was not answered on the night of July 29-30 (II, 167) thus giving Berchtold an excuse for not replying to the *"Halt in Belgrad"* proposal (II, 168). If Bethmann refused the second Conrad-Berchtold request, writes Schmitt, "the reproach would be justified that Germany was unwilling to afford that diplomatic support which might spare the Dual Monarchy the necessity of waging war with Russia" (II, 168).[40] If he accepted it, Austria would feel sure of German action and thus reject the *Halt in Belgrad* plan (II, 167-168). There follows an astounding assertion that Bethmann, if he did not succeed in getting the *Halt in Belgrad* proposal accepted on 30th and 31st, "would probably be constrained, for strictly military reasons, to declare war on Russia on 1 August" (II, 168). In other words, whether Bethmann accepted or rejected the second Austrian request he would wreck the prospects of the Austrian adoption of the *Halt in*

[40] Presumably involved phraseology of this sort is what leads reviewers to speak of Schmitt's "lucid" style.

Belgrad proposal; and if this proposal were not adopted, then Conrad's dead line would force Bethmann to declare war on August 1. In brief, Conrad's second request wrecked the *Halt in Belgrad* proposal and the Conrad five day plan would "probably" force Bethmann to declare war on August 1.

To see how nonsensical all this speculation is—Schmitt cites no references in this paragraph (II, 167-168)—one only has to remember that Bethmann rejected the Austrian second request, that there is not the slightest evidence that this rejection influenced Vienna's attitude toward the *Halt in Belgrad* proposal and that the assertion about the declaration of war on August 1st simply assumes that Bethmann's policy was dominated by the *bordereau,* which Bethmann expressly repudiated thrice!

To explain this rash outburst into contradictory and impossible assertions, there is only one consideration at all plausible. Schmitt is about to examine "no fewer than six telegrams" sent by Bethmann on the night of July 29-30 "urging the Austro-Hungarian government to negotiate with Russia" (II, 167). As a preliminary, he fires off his reckless assertions about Bethmann being forced to declare war on August 1 (II, 167-168) in order to cover Bethmann's earnest peace efforts (II, 168-172) with a smoke-screen of prejudice.

The errors in regard to German policy in Schmitt's treatment of the second Austrian *demarche* are equally apparent in his treatment of the third. Here he starts off with quite an error in logic. Conrad

proposed to make a third *demarche* in Berlin; when Berchtold heard that Germany had "accepted" the second he "accordingly"—"adopted General Conrad's proposal" (II, 176-177). It is a little difficult to see why a third was necessary if the second had been accepted.[41]

In the second place, it is a rank error to say that "Berchtold adopted General Conrad's proposal" (II, 177; Kanner, p. 38). Conrad proposed that Germany be asked to tell Russia that " 'even the mobilization of Russia against Austria alone (partial) would cause the mobilization of Germany against Russia' " (II, 176). But Berchtold, unlike Kanner and Schmitt, realized the difference between partial and general mobilization to Germany and wrote to Germany only of " 'the continuation of Russian mobilization' " (II, 177). Here is the same fatal disregard by Schmitt of the distinction between partial and general mobilization that mars the whole book.

It is curious to note Schmitt's perversion of the German rejection of the third Austrian *demarche*. The proposal is described at II, 177 and the rejection at II, 204. But as the rejection by the German government was clear and unmistakable (K. D., 429, note) and as the reason for this rejection is clearly the desire not to precipitate a conflict—"a new statement from us could only be an ultimatum"—

[41] Further light upon this logic is perhaps to be found in the statement that the *rejection* of the first *demarche* would strengthen Conrad's hand for the second (II, 132, note 1) and the *acceptance* of the second put "the game" in Berchtold's hands for the third! (II, 176, 177.)

Schmitt must find some other crime in it. What he finds is that Jagow said "Austria must make the *demarche* alone." This meant "no concessions would be made" and therefore, according to Schmitt, cancelled the German pressure on Vienna on the evening of July 30th (II, 204-205). How the flat rejection of the Austrian request and the suggestion repeated for the *third* time that Austria warn Russia against further preparations can be construed as a sign that "no concessions" would be made to Russia is not easy to understand.[42]

There is Schmitt's argument. Austria made three[43] *demarches* based on the idea that Germany should warn Russia that Russian partial mobilization would cause German mobilization. All three are rejected by the German government. One rejection Schmitt reports with the implication that Germany "tried to evade" the unavoidable (II, 124). The second rejection is simply perverted into an acceptance (II, 135, 176). And the third rejection is twisted into a proof that Bethmann had surrendered to the generals on the 30th (II, 204-205). Thus Conrad's ideas and the Moltke-Conrad agreements of 1909, as interpreted by Kanner, are shoved willfully into the argument. Do the documents show that the German government rejected the Austrian suggestions? The answer is, "Yes, Yes, Yes." Very well, Professor Schmitt will prove the opposite.

[42] Nor could Moltke's message of the morning of the 30th to Conrad, which Schmitt thinks was considered in Vienna as the German answer to the third *demarche* (II, 182, 183), be considered a sign that no concessions would be granted.

[43] According to Schmitt, three; in fact, two.

Had Schmitt taken the trouble to analyze the three Conrad-Berchtold requests he would have noticed that the third differed from the first and second. Had he been anxious to ascertain Bethmann's attitude toward the Conrad-Berchtold requests he would have lined up Bethmann's three rejections and discovered that his answers were the same in each case. He refused German action and suggested *Austrian* action.

In the case of the first *demarche* he refused German action but suggested that the *Austrian* ambassador in St. Petersburg make representations to Russia (K. D., 299, in a passage omitted from Schmitt, II, 124; the whole dispatch is omitted from Kanner, p. 35). Then he explained to Vienna that he had warned Russia against "measures hostile to us," *i.e.*, Germany (K. D., 309, July 28). In the case of the second *demarche,* Bethmann told Vienna plainly that he had told Russia that Russian "mobilization (partial) would apparently call forth *Austrian* countermeasures" (K. D., 385, 12:30 A.M. July 30. Italics mine). Schmitt does not mention this suggestion—he simply omits it (II, 169) as Kanner does (pp. 35-37); it shows clearly that Bethmann considered that Austria alone should answer Russian mobilization against Austria alone. In regard to the altered third *demarche* the attitude of Berlin was that it had already warned Russia in that way, that another warning would be an ultimatum; let Austria warn Russia (K. D., 429, note 2). But Schmitt suddenly warps this third German suggestion that Austria should act

into a sign that "no concessions" would be made (II, 204). Likewise, Kanner cites the third rejection and then proceeds to disregard it (p. 39).

To see just how devious and labyrinthian are the methods by which Schmitt works the *bordereau* into Austro-German policy, consider the following procedure. Conrad proposed on the 29th a *third* request to Germany (II, 176). This was "in exact keeping with the terms of those letters," *i.e.*, the Conrad-Moltke letters. Next, Berchtold "adopted Conrad's proposal" (II, 177), which was "in exact keeping with" the Conrad-Moltke letters and which would have bound Germany to mobilize if Russia decreed partial mobilization. Hence, Berchtold had acted in accordance with the *bordereau*. But Bethmann had already accepted the similar Austrian *second* request (II, 135, 176-177). Hence, Bethmann's policy also by implication coincides with the terms of the *bordereau*. Now, if one remembers that Berchtold did not accept Conrad's third proposal and Bethmann rejected the second request, then one can see how little justification there is for even attempting to jam Bethmann's policy into the *bordereau*.

All this confused straining for false effects cannot obscure the facts (1) that the news and confirmation of Russian partial mobilization (July 29-30) brought no reply from the German government; (2) that the news that Austria had decided on general mobilization as a reply to Russian partial mobilization was not enough to enable Moltke to persuade Bethmann to act on the morning of the

31st; (3) that Germany did not proclaim "state of threatening danger of war" until it received certain news of Russian general mobilization; (4) that both Conrad and Moltke complained bitterly about the delay as they would never have done if their requests had been heeded on the 30th (II, 271, note). These most obvious facts go a long way toward explaining why Schmitt's attempt to fit the *bordereau* on Bethmann's policy is so illogical, erroneous and disjointed. The attempt is a flat failure. The *bordereau* does not fit German policy in July, 1914.

In using the material in Conrad, then, Professor Schmitt swallows whole Conrad's apology and Kanner's interpretation of it and then tries to apply it to German policy and ends up with conclusions that sound plausible until the reader gets out his documents. Moltke's own statement that he had failed to get the diplomas to speed up their work, the fact that none of the three Austrian diplomatic actions produced results—nothing can prevent Schmitt from featuring his theory as though the confused convenience of General Conrad were the very basis of German policy. The *bordereau* must be fitted on!

But enough. Schmitt's acceptance of Conrad's chaotic apology, the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner myth based on partial mobilization, the Konopischt fourth-hand gossip, and the presumption that Germany's decision for war created an entirely new situation—as though Russian general mobilization were directed against Mongolia—all this shows how reckless Schmitt can be in construing materials to fit

the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau.* If Schmitt's *Aufmarsch* on Conrad's memoirs showed more *schnelles energisches Eingreifen* and less tendency toward *agitatorische Tätigkeit* the *Einwirkung* of the *bordereau* would *eventuel* be more *definitiv!*

To sum up, Schmitt attempts to prove that German policy in July 1914 was dictated by Moltke's promise of 1909 to mobilize the German army if Russia mobilized against Austria in an Austro-Serbian conflict. This attempt is a failure because:

(1) Moltke's letter is warped by mistranslation.

(2) Schmitt's colorless version of the Conrad-Moltke agreement becomes a veritable key to German policy by later exaggeration.

(3) Conrad's material is misplaced, mistranslated, misinterpreted and used uncritically to prove strange doctrines that find no support in the German documents.

(4) Moltke and Conrad both complained about the refusal of Bethmann to act until the news of Russian *general* mobilization became a certainty.

(5) *Bethmann rejected flatly the three Austrian requests based on the bordereau.*

With the fall of the *bordereau* goes the theory that Russian partial mobilization caused the German ultimatum to Russia. Schmitt's effort to prove the militarist domination of German policy and to deny the importance of Russian general mobilization collapses completely.

CHAPTER V

Lieutenant Schmitt

FROM the advertisements and reviews one might think that "The Coming of the War" contained numerous revelations of military plans and their application to the diplomatic manœuvres of July, 1914. "The author," writes Lutz, "exhibits a remarkable understanding of the military requirements of the different nations, and it is a welcome feature of the book, often neglected by others, that he points out the bearing of the military situation on the current diplomatic negotiations."[1] But the fact is that the military information contained in these two volumes is used and abused in the same way as the diplomatic information—to lend a respectable appearance to anti-German prejudices of the 1914 vintage.

In general, the method used is to overemphasize Austrian and German military plans, and to inject them forcibly into the diplomatic proceedings without any direct proof whatsoever. The *Bordereau* and the *Liége* theories are examples of the sensationalist, minor propositions that are said to be decisive for Austro-German policy without any proof except garbled, mistranslated, and misinterpreted sources

[1] *A. H. R.*, April, 1931, Vol. XXXVI, p. 596. Otherwise Lutz, like the other specialists in the field (Barnes, Fay, Langer, Moon, Swain) is very critical of Schmitt's work.

and alleged sources. But when military information damaging to the Entente myth is to be inserted, then the procedure shifts; if it would tend to justify Austro-German decisions it is put after the decisions and often simply labelled "from the military point of view" (II, 197, 207, 211, 214); when it would damage the case for the Entente it is glossed over, as in the shabby account of pre-war armaments (I, 54-55) and Russian preparations for general mobilization (I, 510-511; II, 31-33, 94-95), or put in the footnotes, as in the case of the Anglo-Belgian negotiations (I, 14 note, 34 note, 47 note; II, 384 note); when the damaging information must be placed in the text it is preceded and followed by all kinds of moralistic excuses (I, 509-510; II, 17, note 2, 19-20, 226). In short, "The Coming of the War" shows little or no trace of the calm detachment of the military expert.

The most striking case of the misuse of military information is the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau,* mentioned above. This preposterous attempt to fit the documents into Kanner's formula is based on mistranslations, misinterpretations, omissions, and errors enough to throw the Schmitt accusations out of court. If this is military information it is badly garbled and the attempt to connect it with German policy is a flat failure.

Still more serious is the failure to appreciate the significance of Russian general mobilization, a failure so obvious, so flagrant and so far-reaching that it disfigures nearly all the conclusions on German

policy in the second volume. The substitution of partial for general mobilization warps the narrative in the following places, *inter alia:*

(A) The account of the German warning to Russia on July 26th. This warning specifically mentioned Russian measures "aimed in any way at us," that is, at Germany, not at Austria, (II, 8). On the next two days Bethmann described the dispatch as a warning against Russian "military measures directed in any way at us" (K. D., 245, July 27), and against "Russian measures hostile to us," *i.e.,* Germany (K. D., 309, July 28). It would be difficult to find clearer language or clearer confirmations than these three telegrams indicating that Germany was warning Russia against mobilization on the *German* border. The chief cause of this warning—a general staff report that Russia was calling up reserves, indicating general mobilization—Schmitt relegates to other places (II, 9, note 3, and II, 44).

Moreover, Jagow stated on July 27th that Germany would not retaliate if Russia mobilized against Austria alone (II, 67, note 1, 94, 135, 139-140, 294, note 2); and this was announced to Russia, France and Britain (II, 94, note). In other words, Germany says she will not object to Russian partial mobilization (27th) and warns Russia against mobilization on the German border (26th). But Schmitt insists that the warning was directed against Russian partial mobilization on the *Austrian* frontier! (II, 9, 106, note 2, 176, 188). He thus opens the way for four conclusions unwarranted by the documents: (a)

the introduction of the *bordereau* by implication (II, 9, 176-177); (b) German acceptance *(sic)* of the second Conrad-Berchtold request (II, 176-177); (c) the conclusions that the misinterpreted German policy of July 30 was the same as the misinterpreted German policy of July 26th (II, 188); (d) the misinterpretation that Germany would not mediate if Russia mobilized (II, 106, note 2).

(B) The account of the German warning to Russia at 12:50 P.M. on July 29th. This warning read that "further continuance of mobilization measures by Russia" would bring German mobilization and war (II, 105, 134). This is interpreted by Schmitt as a warning against Russian partial mobilization (II, 105, 135, 176). Similar phraseology in the third Conrad-Berchtold request is interpreted similarly (II, 177, 183, 204).

As for the third Conrad-Berchtold request to Germany to warn Russia (and promise Austria) that Russian measures would bring German mobilization, it is clear that it is *not* Russian partial mobilization that is referred to. Berchtold's language ("the continuation of Russian mobilization") differed radically[2] from Conrad's ("the mobilization of Russia against Austria alone," II, 176-177); it resembled Szögyény's account of the German policy of warning Russia against "the continuation of the present mobilization measures,"[3] that is, undoubtedly Rus-

[2] Schmitt failed to notice the difference, II, 177.

[3] A. R. B., III, 4. The passage is not cited in Schmitt, II, 176. He translates the German warning of July 29th differently in different places (II, 105, 134).

sian general mobilization because the decree for partial mobilization was not known in Berlin at the time the 29th warning was sent out that Szögyény was describing. Berchtold, therefore, changed Conrad's formula to include the German policy, which was not directed against partial mobilization.

It is instructive to note here the peculiar manner in which Schmitt handles Russian military measures, and the information about those measures that reached Berlin. At first he gives eight pages to the Russian military measures decreed on July 24-25 but gives only one short paragraph to the most important aspect of those measures, preparations for general mobilization (I, 510-511). Some preparations for general mobilization are even included in a paragraph that ostensibly deals with partial mobilization (I, 508). Later, in discussing the Russian preparations of July 26-28 (II, 31-33), he explains that probably unauthorized measures were taken in the frontier districts (II, 32), but does not mention general mobilization.

Then he manages to run in the German warning of July 29th (II, 105) in a chapter devoted to Russian military measures July 28-29 (II, 85-114) in which there is only a single reference to the information received in Berlin about actual Russian measures. When the German warning appears again (II, 134. Again "very" is omitted.) there is a page devoted to Entente military measures (II, 133-134), but the German warning is immediately (II, 135) declared to be against Russian partial mobilization,

"precisely" what Austria wanted. The Russian measures reported to Berlin on July 28 and 29 (before noon) that obviously pointed toward general mobilization (K. D., 274, 276, 291, 294, 295, 310a, 327, 331, 333, 335a, 338) are almost flippantly treated by reference to only two, weakened by the statement that they were "from Austrian sources" (II, 133-134). The general staff report of later in the day (K. D., 372, July 29) is quoted (II, 134) presumably because a note can be added that part of it was "'still unconfirmed'" (II, 134, note 2). Of the eleven reports to Berlin on July 28-29 relating to Russian general mobilization, two (K. D., 327, 331) are given (II, 133-134); two (K. D., 276, 295) appear earlier in brief extracts (II, 32); two (K. D., 294, 295) are interred in a footnote along with a report (K. D., 296) dealing with partial mobilization (II, 124, note 2); and a minor extract of the most important (K. D., 338) appears earlier once (II, 86) and is warped out of all significance at the critical point in the argument (II, 133); the rest are simply omitted. The evidence, then, is whittled down to insignificance.

The obvious explanation of the German warning of July 29th is to be found in a document that Schmitt treats superficially (II, 133). That is Pourtalès' telegram from St. Petersburg which arrived early on the morning of the 29th (K. D., 338). Pourtalès stated that Russian military measures were going beyond partial mobilization. The Russian minister of war had promised that no mobiliza-

tion would be effected on the German border (K. D., 242); now the German ambassador finds that such measures are being taken.[4] As a result came the German warning that noon against the "further continuance of Russian mobilization measures"; it was at a time when the decision to order partial mobilization was not known in Berlin[5] and does *not* relate to partial but to general mobilization.

The failure to throw light on German knowledge of Russian measures is all the more reprehensible in that Schmitt takes great care to explain what military news the Entente Powers received and even says that it makes no difference whether it was accurate or not. "It is therefore important to record what each war office believed the other side to be doing" (II, 17, note 2). For Russia every possible hint of suspicion of Austro-German measures is included, Schmitt even adding some of his own (II, 46, note 2, 94, 98, note 1, "Secret orders may have been issued" by Austria, 184, note 2). For France the excuses are legion (I, 68; II, 17-20, 225, 234, 236, "The justification of their action was that they believed Germany to be taking secretly very extensive measures," 236, 294, note 2, 296). For Britain, military measures were simply a matter of course (I, 517; "accidental," II, 44; "intended to take no chances,"

[4]The general staff report of July 28th (K. D., 310a), which Schmitt neglects because of his neglect of the new edition of the Kautsky Documents, warned the foreign office that it was "established that Russia was taking certain military measures on the German border also, that must be considered as preparation for a war."

[5]The notification of the Russian intention to decree partial mobilization did not reach Berlin until the afternoon of July 29th about 3 P.M. after the German warning had been sent out. (K. D., 343, note 2: 2:52 P.M.) Schmitt omits the time from his account (II, 139 and note 3).

II, 120; "the fighting departments were determined" to take "immediate advantage" of any decision, II, 161). For the Entente Powers, then, exaggerations and wild suspicions are urged as justification for military measures when one would naturally expect in an historian at least censure for political subservience to reckless military and naval advisors. As for Germany, the news she had of the principal factor—Russian general mobilization—is scattered, garbled, omitted and misinterpreted; on July 30th, writes Schmitt, even after discussing German "decisions" of that day, "the news received . . . of Russian preparations was a *mixture of the certain and the vague*" (II, 207. Italics mine).*

Thus the military information necessary to form a judgment of the German policy in general and the policy of July 29th in particular, is transplanted, garbled in meaningless extracts or so weakened in other ways that it is impossible for the reader to see that the German warning of July 29 was called forth by news of Russian preparations for general mobilization.

The results of this warping of German policy appear (a) in the introduction of the *bordereau* (II, 135, 168, 176, 199); (b) in the idea that Bethmann thought war inevitable once Russian partial mobilization had been decreed (II, 130-131, 143, 148, 186-213); (c) in the "decision for war" on the

*Conscientiously exact statements of German military men that show a laudable restraint, in contrast to the recklessness of Entente military advisers, are often used as the basis of quite misleading conclusions (II, 59-60, notes, 134, 191, 207).

30th on the basis of Russian partial mobilization (II, 199); (d) in the conclusion that Russian general mobilization made little difference in German policy (II, 263).

(C) Jagow's interpretation of Russian military measures. On July 27th Jagow stated that Russian partial mobilization against Austria would not call forth German counter measures, but added that "the Russian system of mobilization was so complicated that it might be difficult exactly to locate her mobilization" (II, 67, note 1). This is a good description, one that fits in with all the accounts we have of the Russian system.

But Schmitt warps this statement out of all significance. In one place, "Jagow's remarks left the German Government free to interpret Russian military measures as it liked" (II, 67, note 1); in another, one finds the part about partial mobilization introduced to show that Russian partial mobilization was not a dangerous measure (II, 93-94); in another, to show in a most obscure way that there was a contradiction between the attitude of the German Government and of its ambassador to Russia (II, 106, note 2); in another, to show that there had been a change in the German attitude to suit General Conrad (II, 135); in another, to show that Jagow had broken his promise when in reality he was merely stating that Germany was worried by Russian measures along her frontier (II, 139-140); in another, to show that Jagow was slippery when he objected to Russian partial mobilization on July 30th, the

passage about Russian general mobilization that is the true explanation of his attitude being omitted (II, 294, note 2).[7] Thus Jagow's remarks that contain the key to the accurate German interpretation of Russian mobilization measures disappear beneath clouds of suspicions and errors.

(D) The German attitude toward Russian partial mobilization. The German attitude from July 26th on was clear: while it would not cause German mobilization immediately (II, 67, note 1) it would cause Austrian counter-measures that would in turn start the ball rolling toward a European war (K. D., 349, 380, 385), and would make German mediation between Austria and Russia "difficult if not impossible" (K. D., 408, July 30). But Schmitt interprets this as he did the German warning of July 26, namely, as a warning that "Russia must not mobilize at all" (II, 188) and insists that the German Government regarded Russian partial mobilization as making war "inevitable" (II, 131, 148, 186, 199), doubtless so that German policy can be pictured in the frame of the *bordereau.*

Toward Russian general mobilization the German attitude was clear and firm from the beginning. Russian general mobilization meant German mobilization and that meant war (K. D., 219, 342, and 490, among many). In the face of this clear, unwavering attitude toward Russian general mobilization Schmitt and Kanner must insist that partial mobili-

[7] Quoting a few words from Cambon's telegram on the authority of the notoriously garbled French Yellow Book and from a document that gives every indication of having been "edited." F. Y. B., 109.

zation was the important point. To reach this conclusion they must disregard the very nature of Russian preparatory measures, they must disregard the military facts about Russian preparations for general mobilization and they must warp the amazingly tolerant German attitude toward Russian partial mobilization into an unshakable belief that war was "inevitable." For that purpose are misused many volumes of "military information."

The most sensational of the pseudo-military plans Schmitt discovers back of Austro-German diplomacy is the story of the projected *coup de main* at Liége (II, 60, 130, 149-151, 191, 195, 209, 264-266, 290 note 4). In revealing the stupendous diplomatic importance of this plan Schmitt displays a fearful ignorance of military facts and again fails to connect the military scheme with German diplomacy.[8]

The plan to seize Liége by a *coup de main* at the outbreak of war is well known. But Schmitt is the first writer to make it the *only* plan the Germans had for seizing the strategically important fortress (II, 59-60). Actually there were *three* plans for acquiring Liége quickly, as explained by the German official history of the war in 1925.[9] First, there was the *coup de main;* if that failed the II army was to attack it (with heavy artillery); and if that did not succeed at once, the II army was to march by it until

[8] Schmitt's treatment of this topic is so sensational that his publishers, presumably with his knowledge and consent, saw fit to declare on the paper cover that it is one of Schmitt's great contributions to the war-guilt controversy; a statement as unfounded as the theory itself.

[9] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 71-72. Three plans in addition to the hope that Belgium might not resist.

it was taken.[10] "It was of decisive importance," according to the German official history, that the routes going through Liége should be opened "promptly."[11] But there is nothing to justify Schmitt's statement that there was only one plan to take it "promptly."

Schmitt, writing as though Moltke and the German general staff were complete idiots, says that "the entire strategic plan of the German general staff depended . . . on the seizure of Liége by a *coup de main*" (II, 59-60); that it was "an all-important feature of the German plan of campaign" (II, 130); and that "the whole strategic plan might be upset unless the German army got possession of Liége quickly" (II, 151) *i.e.*, according to Schmitt, by the *coup de main*. Thus the fate of the German Empire is made to depend upon a risky scheme that was meant to save the trouble of a regular bombardment![12]

How far from reality Schmitt's overemphasis of the *coup de main* plan leads him can be seen from the actual military operations. The *coup de main* was a failure, for the forts controlling the route to be traversed by the first army did not fall until August 11-13th, after the heavy guns had been brought up.[13]

[10] Schmitt's English suffers from his excitement in telling the story. He has "ago" when he means "before" and "now" for "then." (II, 149.)

[11] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 71.

[12] R. H. Lutz makes the same error in *Jour. Mod. Hist.*, March, 1931, III, p. 148. T. H. Thomas, "Holland and Belgium in the German War Plan," *Foreign Affairs*, January 1928, VI, 2, pp. 315-328, whose errors—due to prejudice and to ignorance of European diplomatic and military matters—Schmitt copies, admits that there was at least one other plan (p. 322).

[13] "Der Weltkrieg," I, p. 119.

Nor did it prevent extensive destruction of railroads and tunnels.[14] But, in spite of the failure of the *coup de main,* the German first army got started in Belgium a day ahead of its schedule.[15] These facts show the obvious absurdity of the idea that the *coup de main* was the only plan for taking Liége quickly.[16] If the Germans had had no other plan, they would not be through Belgium yet.

The explanation of Schmitt's blundering here is his desire to make German diplomacy dependent upon military schemes, like the Liége and the Conrad five day plans, thus proving that the military men ran the German government, as Grey and Crowe said. The two military schemes are jammed into Bethmann's decisions in the most outrageously unhistorical manner without a shadow of proof (II, 151, 168, 209).[17] That the two schemes were merely matters of military convenience does not prevent Schmitt from making them more important than Russian general mobilization (II, 209, 264-266).

As for actual proof that the Liége *coup de main* plan seriously influenced German diplomacy, Schmitt furnishes none. Moltke said nothing about Liége in

[14] "Der Weltkrieg," I, p. 120.

[15] "Der Weltkrieg," I, p. 130. If the *coup de main* had succeeded, Liége would have fallen on the 6th instead of the 16th.

[16] The authors of "Der Weltkrieg," obviously out of courtesy to Ludendorff, say that the *coup de main* "fulfilled its purpose," "on the whole" (I, 117). But if this were so, why was the Aix-la-Chapelle-Liége railroad not repaired until August 15 (I, 120), why did the important forts hold out till August 11-12 (I, 119) and why were the big guns necessary at all? (I, 117-120).

[17] Probably these schemes get into Schmitt's mind as part of Bethmann's policy more readily than they should because of his error in considering that Moltke was not the subordinate of the Chancellor (I, 298; II, 198). The same error appears in *Jour. Mod. Hist.*, March 1931, III, p. 148, R. H. Lutz.

his long memorandum of July 28-29 (K. D., 349). Nothing was said about Liége at the Prussian Council of Ministers on July 30th, as Schmitt admits (II, 191). Nothing was said about it at the session of the Bundesrat on August 1st (K. D., 553). In fact, nothing can be found in the documents or memoirs that directly or indirectly proves or even implies that Liége was more important than Russian military measures. The whole story must be inserted by speculation.

Schmitt's speculation takes the following course. The drafting of the ultimatum by Moltke on the 26th and the statement in it that France and England intended to invade Belgium "were of the greatest significance" (II, 59) because the "entire strategic plan of the German general staff depended . . . on the seizure of Liége by a *coup de main*" and Germany had to have some excuse for the violation of Belgian neutrality. This "offers strong circumstantial support for the belief that the chief of staff regarded war as imminent. Whether his action can be interpreted as an indication of a desire to force the issue, is an open question" (II, 59-60). Just what is meant by "a desire to force the issue" is not clear; but it is clear that Schmitt is here indulging in unwarranted suspicions based upon his error as to the significance of the *coup de main* and upon the failure to distinguish between whether Moltke thought a European war certain, imminent, likely or merely possible.[18]

[18] The effect Schmitt is seeking, that Moltke was driving the government on to an aggressive war, is heightened by the commission of two serious errors in the footnotes (II, 59-60), (1) that the Germans had no reliable information about Franco-British plans; (2) that French strategy was defensive in the 1890's.

The *coup de main* plan next appears in the account of July 28th in Berlin at a point in the argument where it is necessary to discount the fact that German preparations for war were decidedly meagre (II, 130). The recall of troops necessary for "definite special tasks" on the 28th is interpreted as "probably" referring to the seizure of Liége, an "all-important feature of the German plan of campaign." Then follows the statement that Bethmann on the 28th believed a European war "likely" and Moltke and Falkenhayn "likewise regarded war as certain" (II, 130-131). The prejudice and the confusion apparent in these statements need no comment.

The next step is to insert the *coup de main* plan into Bethmann's calculations. For this purpose a long account of the *coup de main* plan is given (II, 149-151) followed by a quotation from the general staff report of July 29th to the effect that Belgium was making preparations to arm the forts and explode the works, etc. Then comes the statement that the "news of the Belgian preparations would make a decision about peace or war urgent from a military point of view" (Moltke vs. Bethmann) and "in the course of the evening two steps were taken which indicate *very fairly* the reaction of Berlin to the information from Brussels" (II, 151. Italics mine). "Berlin," please note, not "Moltke." One of these steps was the sending of the ultimatum to Brussels for later use (II, 151-153) and the other Bethmann's bid for British neutrality on the night of the 29th (II, 153-155). As both of these steps were taken

by the foreign office, the Belgian preparations that might interfere with the *coup de main* are now safely inserted as the cause of Bethmann's actions. Thus the *coup de main* plan is inserted into Bethmann's policy.

But if one examines these two actions, it is difficult to see why they were caused by the news from Brussels (II, 151). The war, if war came, would come from Russian military measures, not from Liége; the German government on the evening of the 29th had certain news of Russian partial mobilization and much information that preparations for Russian general mobilization were far advanced. This German knowledge of Russian military measures is whittled down to insignificance by Schmitt; instead of it, the news from Brussels about Liége is inserted as a reason for German anxiety (II, 151, 191, 209). The ultimatum to Belgium was to be delivered only in case war broke out; it was actually delivered at 7 P.M. on August 2 (II, 388). As for the bid for British neutrality, Bethmann said specifically that a "Russian attack on Austria" might precipitate a European war and gave this as the cause of his action (II, 153). In other words, these two diplomatic actions have no relation to the fortification of Liége; they were the result of the danger of war represented in Russian military measures. They prove none of Schmitt's speculations; in fact, quite the opposite.

What has misled Schmitt is his desire to prove that Bethmann's policy was dictated by the military

men. He postulates only one plan for taking Liége quickly (the *coup de main)* and shows that this plan was very risky and that its success was dependent upon Belgian inaction (II, 149-151). Now there can be no question that if the fate of the German Empire depended upon the success of six brigades "on a peace footing" in seizing Liége, Bethmann would have been worried greatly about the news from Liége. But it was not the only plan; the result of making it the only plan is to exaggerate Bethmann's and Moltke's minor preoccupation into a major motive.

It is interesting to note the devious method by which the *coup de main* is inserted into Bethmann's diplomacy—as in the case of the *bordereau*—by implication. Schmitt first postulates that the *coup de main* was the only plan for taking Liége quickly (II, 60); later he talks merely of the necessity of taking Liége quickly as a motive for German action without specific reference to the *coup de main* plan (II, 151, 191, 209, 264-265). But, as the *coup de main* was the only plan, according to Schmitt, then it must be implied wherever he talks of taking Liége quickly. Thus the *coup de main* is arbitrarily inserted into Bethmann's diplomacy by implication.

In still another indirect way the *coup de main* plan is inserted into Bethmann's diplomacy by implication. On July 30th, about noon, according to Schmitt, the only worry of the German military authorities was about Liége (II, 191). But, as Bethmann "accepted the position of the generals" in the afternoon

or the evening of July 30 (II, 198-199) therefore Bethmann must have been worried chiefly about Liége and the *coup de main.* Hence "the situation at Liége," as well as Conrad's pressure, are stated to be the causes of a Berlin "decision to present an ultimatum to Russia" on the night of the 30th (II, 209).

That every statement in these two speculative arguments is either flatly erroneous or clearly ridiculous, does not prevent Schmitt from concluding that the Liége situation was more important than Russian general mobilization (II, 264, 265).

The true significance of the *coup de main* plan is brought out well by J. H. Bredt in the book "Die Belgische Neutralität und der Schlieffensche Feldzugsplan" (cited at II, 150, note 1). From this account it is clear that the *coup de main* became important only after war became inevitable, after Russian general mobilization. Once war became inevitable it was necessary to have a declaration of war on Russia, according to Bethmann's way of thinking, in order to bring a declaration of war between Germany and France and thus furnish a legal pretext for the invasion of Belgium. All these steps were inevitable and certain; the *coup de main* merely hastened the legal formalities. But the basic cause of the declaration of war was Russian military measures; only after them did Liége become important. Schmitt, of course, after copying Bredt's description of the *coup de main,* simply omits the chief factor

and concentrates on Liége as if it were the cause of the war.

The evidence, however, in every case where Schmitt brings in the Liége story, points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that the Germans were worried by *Russian* military measures, not Belgian. The news in Berlin on the 26th produced the German warning to Russia (II, 8); instead of this, Schmitt emphasizes the drafting of the ultimatum to Belgium (II, 59). The news in Berlin on the evening of the 29th was of Russian partial mobilization and many preparations for general mobilization; characteristically Schmitt concentrates his attention on (1) five lines about Belgian preparations (II, 151, 191) in the general staff report of the 29th (K. D., 372), which contained nine times as much material about Franco-Russian preparations; (2) on the sending of the ultimatum to Brussels, though it was not used until August 2 (II, 151-3). As for July 30th, the general staff report of that date, which Schmitt did not trouble to look at, declared that the "period preparatory to war" was "far advanced along the Russo-German border" and that Germany "must count on a more rapid development of (Russian) mobilization" (K. D., 431a).[19] On that same 30th, Bethmann declared in the Council that the military measures France and Russia had taken resembled the German "proclamation of threatening

[19] Some extracts from the general staff report of July 30th were printed in *K. S. F.*, V. 8, p. 761 in August, 1927. The report was printed in full in the 1927 edition of the Kautsky Documents.

danger of war," that is, were close to general mobilization (K. D., 456; quoted at II, 190); and Moltke telegraphed to Conrad, "Do not declare war on Russia, but await the Russian attack" (II, 191). But in spite of all this conclusive evidence, Schmitt asserts that the German military men, and presumably Bethmann, were worried *only* by the Belgian measures.[20]

The desperately speculative nature of these assertions about Bethmann's policy is all the more unsatisfactory because Schmitt commits many grievous errors and misinterpretations of the whole Belgian issue, military and diplomatic.

The first of these, one that betrays his anti-German bias, concerns the reasons why Germany went through Belgium. On this subject Schmitt tosses off the following flippant remarks: "German strategy required the defeat of France as the prelude to a military decision against Russia" (I, 68); "the German plan of campaign against France involved marching across Belgium" (I, 2); in order to have a "strategic advantage" (II, 266); in order to have an "easy road into France" (II, 149). The nearest he gets to an explanation is to deny that Moltke gave the "real reason" (II, 60, note 1). Yet the "real reason" has been often stated; it was that the growth of the Russian army, the Franco-Russian alliance, and the increased speed of French mobilization forced the Germans to plan to attack France

[20] Similarly at II, 209 and II, 264-266.

first and get back quickly to meet the Russians.[21] Since the French had built forts that made a quick invasion of France through Alsace-Lorraine impossible, the German general staff decided that it must go through Belgium.[22] Why could Schmitt not state these facts? Because, if he did, he would raise the question of why the French and Russians piled up such huge armies on both sides of Germany. Instead, one reads that the cash spent and the number of troops accumulated make no difference in settling the question of responsibility (I, 54).

On the Belgian question, then, Professor Schmitt's attitude resembles that of Professor Slosson, who declares that "Germany was, after all, the real author of the secret agreements by which Belgium became a minor partner of the Entente."[23] The argument runs that Germany's plan for invading Belgium was so "well known" (Schmitt, "France was well aware" . . . I, 68) that Belgium and the Entente were justified in taking precautions. But the justification process should include the Franco-Russian alliance, the Russian army, and the French forts. If justification is at all in place in a diplomatic-military study, then it must be extended to the facts on both sides. Otherwise the study ceases to be history and becomes stale propaganda.

On the question of Belgian neutrality, Schmitt

[21] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 8-9, 51-54. According to Thomas the real reason was that it offered "an opportunity for an unparalleled *tour de force* of pure strategy" (p. 317). Thomas actually implies that Schlieffen's plan of 1905 was based only on conditions prevailing in 1905, and that the Germans owed a duty to someone to get themselves slaughtered in front of French forts.

[22] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 53-54.

[23] *A. H. R.*, XXXVI, No. 2, Jan. 1931, p. 439.

goes even beyond Slosson. Whereas Slosson admits that Belgium had given up her neutrality Schmitt takes that neutrality seriously (I, 2; II, 59-60, 291-293, 383-394, 399-402). He omits the British attitude of 1887 (291-293, 383-385) and takes a position flatly contradictory to the leading authorities and the reading of the treaty of 1839 when he asserts that there was for Britain a "legal obligation under the treaty of 1839 to defend Belgian neutrality" (II, 291). But no serious student of international politics could fail to note the varying interpretations given the treaty of 1839 throughout its history.[24] On March 28, 1912, Poincaré wrote to the French ambassador in London that France would not be the aggressor "if a concentration of German forces in the neighborhood of Aix-la-Chapelle should force us to cover our northern frontier by penetrating into Belgian territory."[25] This is exactly the attitude Germany took in 1914 toward Belgian neutrality. The legal aspects that Schmitt overemphasizes fade to insignificance before the policies of the Entente in building up colossal armaments on both sides of Germany and in attempting to force their will on Germany in 1914 by the mobilization of those armaments. To talk of the "scrap of paper" as "a winged phrase that captured the imagination of the world" (II, 407) is both illogical and sensationalistic.

Schmitt's prejudices come out clearly from his treatment of the information each side had of the

[24] Cf. the illuminating material gathered in Barnes, H. E., "L'Angleterre et la Guerre Mondiale," pp. 66-75.
[25] "Documents Françaises," III, 2, No. 269, p. 265.

other's plans for going through Belgium. For French and British plans to jump into Belgium at the outbreak of a European war Schmitt simply assumes that it was not necessary to prove they had information. "France," he writes, "was well aware" of the German plans (I, 68); "the British general staff at first *wished to* send the British army to Antwerp and Belgium" . . . (I, 34, note 2. Italics mine). On the other hand, he insists that Germany had no "reliable information" of the Franco-British plans and grasps at the scientifically moderated statements of Kuhl and the German official history (II, 59-60, notes). He omits from the German official history (1) the significant statement that Schlieffen argued in 1898 that France would go through Belgium;[26] (2) the statement that the German general staff in 1914 was "certain . . . of an immediate attack" by the French armies in Belgium.[27] Nor does he cite any of the material about French plans to invade Belgium that has been accessible for years.[28] These would indicate the valuelessness of Belgian neutrality in the eyes of the European powers. His anxiety to cover up the tracks of the French is apparent in his erroneous statement that French strategy was "defensive" in the 1890's (II, 60, note 1), when French strategy was basically offensive because (1) it was part of a Franco-Russian plan that called for a Russian offensive against Germany[29] and (2) the defensive was

[26] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 54.
[27] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 67-68. Schmitt considers the German statement that France planned to advance on Namur untrue (II, 389, 405).
[28] See Barnes, "L'Angleterre et la Guerre Mondiale."
[29] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 8.

only the preliminary to a real French offensive as soon as the French learned where the German troops were.[80] That this offensive would go through Belgium was the natural presumption of anyone acquainted with the military and diplomatic literature of the time.

Other errors on military matters relating to Belgium in "The Coming of the War" can be found in abundance. There is one of the usual straddles: At one place he writes that "the French were, in general, well aware" of the German intention "to carry out an invasion of France through Belgium on a tremendous scale" (I, 68), and elsewhere that the French general staff thought that Germany would go through only a small part of Belgium (II, 291, note). Again, he puts the fall of Liége at August 9th (II, 390, note 2) though the last fortress did not fall until August 16th.[81] He writes that the forts of Liége were "without adequate facilities for communication or command" (II, 150) as though telephones did not exist. He writes, "If the Belgians did resist with energy, the entire German plan would be thrown out of gear" (II, 149) and tells of "the Belgian measures which threatened to block the strategic gateway at Liége" (II, 191), just as though the Germans had no artillery and no trucks and could not march on foot. Again he writes that Liége was to be seized "within a few hours of mobilization" (II, 266) although the fact is that the *coup de main*

[80] "Les Armées Françaises," I, pp 7-8. Plan XIV.
[81] "Der Weltkrieg," I, 120.

did not hit Liége for about 103 hours after mobilization.

The Liége story, then, because of the relative unimportance of the *coup de main* plan, because of the failure of Schmitt's endeavor to connect it with Bethmann's policies, and because of the errors and prejudices on display in Schmitt's account—the Liége story just collapses. With its collapse, and with the death of the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau,* collapse most of his conclusions in regard to Bethmann's policy on July 29th, 30th and 31st.

In "The Coming of the War" one finds numerous references to the idea that the Central Powers planned to wage a "preventive war" (I, 100 note; 125, 134, 138, 267, 290, 293, 305, 306, 317-319, 321, 324, 327, 345, 348, 367, 370, 372; II, 58-59, 66, note, and 136). But nowhere does he develop the theme because even he would probably be forced to explain what the "preventive" war was to prevent. That would lead him, as would an investigation of the "real reason" why Germany went through Belgium, into a discussion of pre-war armaments. This he must avoid, otherwise his picture of the sweet, peaceful passive Entente would lose its pure enameled whiteness.

In brief, the deficiencies in Schmitt's military information are enough to disqualify him as a writer on diplomatic and military affairs. His misunderstanding of the German attitude toward Russian partial mobilization and his insistence on the untenable theory that the proclamation of "threatening danger

of war" meant mobilization (II, 199, 264)—these wreck the crucial argument of the book. The account of the projected *coup de main* at Liége, the assumption that the Austrian concentration would be completed in Galicia in forty-eight hours (II, 332), the imaginary German plan to send troops to the East (II, 168), the neglect of pre-war armaments, the idea that the Prussian Chief of Staff was the equal of the German Chancellor (I, 268; II, 168), the statement that the German constitution "prescribed" a peace-time army of one per cent of the population, although that provision in the constitution went out of force in 1871 (I, 54, 437), the errors of omission and commission in regard to the German plan for invading Belgium, the feeble excuses presented for Entente armaments—all these testify to Schmitt's inaccuracy and prejudice in military matters.

As for the nonsense about Liége, it is a characteristically jumbled, erroneous and speculative argument that Schmitt presents. As in the case of the Conrad five-day scheme, there is no evidence that worry about Liége influenced Bethmann's policy from July 26th through July 31st. Schmitt just inserted it therein by highly speculative and eccentric logic.

In short, Schmitt's military information and his ability to connect it with the diplomatic manœuvres of July, 1914, turn out to be imaginary. His object is to uphold Entente exaggerations and fantasies in regard to military domination of German policy; his method is to read German military plans into Beth-

mann's policy by desperately speculative arguments that have no foundation in fact; and his results reach the bizarre in his sensational treatment of the *coup de main* at Liége. Hence it is impossible accurately to speak of Schmitt's use of military information in any but the most derogatory terms.

The errors in military matters, caused by his unhistorical purpose, can be listed as follows:

(1) Elimination of Russian general mobilization as a factor in causing German diplomatic decisions.

(2) The substitution for Russian general mobilization of
   a. Russian partial mobilization
   b. The *bordereau*
   c. The *coup de main* plan at Liége.

(3) The misplacement and misinterpretation of military evidence so as to show that
   a. German military plans dominated German diplomacy
   b. German military plans and actions forced the Entente to adopt extreme measures
   c. Entente military plans had little influence on Entente decisions
   d. Entente military plans and actions had little influence on German decisions.

That these are errors of the most serious kind has been demonstrated in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI

The Double Standard

AS might be expected, Professor Schmitt poses as a neutral historian. The preface (I, p. vii) strikes a lofty tone of careful impartiality and makes the reader think that the author is humble before the difficulty of the problem, particularly because "the motives of conduct can often be only surmised." Many amateur reviewers, unfortunately, are misled by these statements. "He is thoroughly the historian, and never the propagandist," writes Schumann.

In the conclusion (II, 480-482) there is a set of clammy remarks typical of the author's surfacy impartiality. This statement—of dubious accuracy, be it noted—"no diplomacy, however skillful, could have devised a compromise between the firm resolution of Austria-Hungary to make war on Serbia and the determination of Russia not to permit the crushing of that small state," is followed by talk of German conduct that served "to *create* only distrust and suspicion" and of the Russian failure to *"appreciate sufficiently* the probable effect of their military measures on the highly strung German *general staff."* Then we read that the "British cabinet found its action largely *paralyzed* because its members could not decide what course to take" (Italics mine).

To these conclusions, apparently so calm, the following comments may add a little clarity. In the first place, would not Russia have found a compromise with Austria-Hungary if France and Britain had not supported her? Was not Russian determination to fight based upon the support of France and Britain in pursuit of a policy that required the weakening of Austria-Hungary, the sole reliable ally of Germany? But in Schmitt's conclusion, Britain was "paralyzed" —a very strange word to describe Grey's encouragement of Russian mobilization—and France is not mentioned at all. Nor were suspicions of Germany *created* in 1914; they were at least ten years old and became active every time Germany moved a finger. Moreover, the Russian government *did* "appreciate sufficiently" the "probable effect" of their military measures upon the German government—for the government, not the general staff, was in control in Berlin.

It is the same throughout the two volumes, but this sham impartiality need deceive no one. What the reader finds is an elaborate apparatus of documents distorted from their normal order, often mistranslated, garbled, and misinterpreted, to prove that the Entente was good, the Central Powers bad. There are too many extravaganzas, too many appeals to popular prejudice, and too many excesses of bias to allow this book to be called neutral or impartial.

GERMANY NOT GUILTY IN 1914

I. Pro-British Bias

Gross prejudice in favor of British policies and statesmen appears in nearly all of Professor Schmitt's work. "The Coming of the War" contains plenty of evidence that this prejudice dominates all his thinking. In this book it is "so strong as to render him unable to write impartial history" (Swain). Indeed, the pro-British bias is so strong and so all-pervasive that the sole purpose of the two long volumes seems to be the defence of British policies and of British statesmen.

In the decade before the war the British policy of building up Ententes had a double aspect. One purpose, the minor, was to remove disputes with France and Russia. This clearing of decks, however, had another, major purpose—action against Germany. In the face of this dual policy Schmitt of course accepts only the peaceful one: "the primary purpose" of the British Entente policy was "to liquidate existing disputes" (I, 28). One may ask if the Franco-British naval and military agreements were intended "to liquidate existing disputes"? When Grey suggests the Triple Entente so that "if it is necessary to check Germany it could then be done" (I, 37) Schmitt comments that "Germany, by her Moroccan policy had brought about the very situation" she was trying to prevent (I, 38). How does the "checking of Germany" prove that the Entente was bent only on liquidating existing disputes between its members? Schmitt does not return to the matter.

Nor does he quote—so far as I can be sure in reading over his jumbled account of pre-war diplo-

macy—Grey's own interpretation of the Entente: "Ten years hence, a combination of Britain, Russia and France may be able to dominate Near Eastern policy" (British Documents, IV, p. 617, Feb. 24, 1908). His discussion of British policy at Reval in June, 1908, is equally unsatisfactory. The British representative there said to the Russians that Britain desired that Russia should be as strong as possible on land and on sea so that in "seven or eight years" Russia would be the arbiter of the situation" (I, 39). Professor Schmitt—"M. Izvolski, for his part, was *equally cautious*" (I, 39. Italics mine). And what is to be said for an historian who omits altogether mention of Admiral Fisher's incitement of the Russians to build up an overwhelming army? (At Reval, 1908).

In short, Schmitt thinks that the Entente was peaceful, quiet, defensive and "cautious." To him British plans "to dominate Near Eastern policy" and to have backward Russia as "the arbiter of the situation" mean nothing. To interpret them accurately would ruin the argument of his whole book.

Here is a list of the more glaring errors and misinterpretations he falls into as a result of his blindness toward the realistic British policy of wrecking a rival through combining with his enemies:

(A) Distortion of pre-war diplomacy. He makes the British seem willing to compromise, the Germans unwilling (I, 46) in spite of Germany's acceptance of a 10 to 16 ratio for the navies (I, 72), of the surrender of the terminus of the Bagdad Railway to Britain (I, 73) and of the surrender of

Morocco to the French. The frame-up at Algeciras is not mentioned; Churchill's attempted swindle—the "naval holiday"—is taken seriously (I, 72); Grey "was as good as his word" in dealing with Russian desires for the Straits in 1908 (I, 51-52); there was "no British commitment to France involved in the military conversations" (I, 35) but the British foreign minister felt deeply "committed" (I, 36-37); "Sir Edward Grey was anticipating by many years the Spirit of Locarno and the Pact of Paris" when he mentioned non-aggression pacts in 1912 and 1914, which, as Schmitt fails to realize, came from *Bethmann* (I, 58; II, 260); Lloyd George's bellicose speech of 1911 gets less than one line (I, 46); Admiral Fisher's instructive memoirs appear only once (I, 40), then as a source for a statement of Stolypin; Grey's denial of negotiations for an Anglo-Russian naval convention ("disingenious, though true") was accepted by Germany (I, 52, note 4) and rejected by Germany (I, 323); no mention of the British admiralty's distortion of the figures on the German navy; Russia, Britain's friend, planned to disrupt Austria-Hungary (I, 131-132) and get the Straits (I, 82-88) but still did not want to disturb the *status quo* (I, 143), etc., etc.

(B) Technical misuse of Grey's memoirs as though they were of the same value as contemporary records, in total disregard of the fact that he was nearly blind when he wrote, he had forgotten much and he had repeated his war-propaganda so frequently that he was unable to tell the truth. Only a

few times does Schmitt condescend to use even the slightest touch of historical criticism on Grey's "Twenty-five Years" (II, 342). Usually Grey's statements in 1925 about his plans and motives in 1914 are accepted at their face value as authentic records on critical points in a manner so flagrant, so uncritical, and so often repeated, that no one can speak of the resulting story as history. (I, 46, n. 2; 48, and n. 1; 52, n. 4; 56; 57; 179; 418; II, 34-35; 41 and n.; 42, n. 1; 46 and n. 3; 115; 118; 136, n. 1; 257-260; 280; 282-283; 348; 409). These quotations from the 1925 memoirs are introduced as though they came from some keen, infallible, final authority—"He himself has explained . . ." (I, 418); "Fortunately the minister himself has recorded the considerations which guided him throughout the crisis . . ." (II, 34-35); and, "He himself has frankly explained the motives of his action . . ." (II, 46). Of course, no historian should neglect Grey's memoirs; but to use them as first-rate authoritative source material is unpardonable.

(C) When Grey's memoirs get a little too "frank" Schmitt exercises all his ingenuity to discover excuses, no matter how illogical or wide of the mark. In the case of Grey's "peace" proposals of July 25-26 (mediation and a conference), Austrian military *operations* were to be prevented, but Russian mobilization measures continued. During the mediation Russian mobilization was to continue, as even Schmitt admits (II, 41). What Grey and Schmitt neglect to state is that Austria was sending half of

her army to the south and that Russian mobilization on the Austrian border would create a dangerous military disadvantage for her, even if she mobilized in the north also. Mediation, then, meant time for Russian mobilization and with Russia mobilized the Entente could dictate its terms. If mediation failed, "Russia would meanwhile have gained time for her mobilization" (B. D., XI, 132) were Grey's words to Benckendorff, *not* quoted in Schmitt (II, 40-41). Similarly, according to Grey, the conference proposal of July 26 was intended to give time for France and Russia "to prepare and for the situation to be altered to the disadvantage of Germany" (quoted at II, 46).

Such realities in British policy drive Schmitt to absurd lengths of illogicality. Grey's proposal of the 25th, he writes, "was the opposite of what Sir Eyre Crowe had suggested" (II, 40-41), namely, mobilizing the fleet and telling France and Russia about it. But he neglects to add here that Crowe's suggestions were almost entirely adopted on the 26th and 27th; his statement is thus both misleading and irrelevant. How he can believe that Grey's furtherance of Russian mobilization on the Austrian frontier "would tend to withhold support from Russia and Austria-Hungary" (II, 41) is just too obscure for discussion.

This matter of Russian mobilization (which Grey told Russia would be the result of mediation) is very, very painful to Schmitt. He admits that mediation would not prevent it, but denies that Grey was "encouraging" the Russians to mobilize, in the face

of Grey's own words at the time to Benckendorff. Grey "took it for granted that if Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia, Russia would mobilize" is only half the story; for if mediation were adopted then Austria-Hungary would not attack Serbia and still Russia would mobilize. Schmitt's final, quite illogical justification of Grey appears in the statement that "he seems to have considered Russian mobilization justified" (II, 41); to support this he gives a long quotation from the memoirs (II, 41, note).

As a final fling, Schmitt writes, "Sir Edward Grey's good faith is not open to doubt" (II, 42) as though the historian must not question Grey's "good faith" and as though the matter under investigation were ethical, not diplomatic. Four lines only do we get on the main point—"But in spite of his own views about Russian mobilization, it was an act of *doubtful wisdom* to communicate these views to the Russian government. We shall see later what use the Russian ambassador made of the news" (II, 42, Italics mine). Could comment on Grey's *Realpolitik* be more trivial?

Similarly inaccurate and awkward camouflage is thrown over Grey's conference proposal of the 26th. It, too, would allow Russian mobilization; the memoirs state that as the chief object of the proposal (quoted, II, 46). But Schmitt, instead of raving about Grey's deceitfulness and recklessness and his policy of terrorizing Europe—as he does about much less dangerous Austro-German proposals—jumps at once to the statement in the memoirs

(which is unsupported by contemporary documents) that if Germany accepted the conference then he was prepared to "give or get guarantees that there would be no mobilizations during the conference" (II, 47). In other words, both Grey and Schmitt declare that the conference was proposed in order to enable Russia to mobilize, and a statement is then added that Grey would have guaranteed no mobilizations.

That there is a certain logical gulf here, even Schmitt sees. He therefore writes in the footnote a quite inaccurate explanation, without giving any references to documents, that is supposed to show that the gulf does not exist. He admits that "a strict interpretation" would "permit Russian mobilization to be carried out." "But as the Russian plan was understood to be to mobilize if and when Austria actually moved against Serbia," and as the conference would prevent that move against Serbia, "a bargain was seemingly possible" (II, 47, note 1). By this he presumably means that Russian mobilization would not take place if Austria did not attack Serbia. This again, is contrary to the purpose of the conference—to let Russia mobilize and prevent the Austrian attack.

Schmitt is flatly wrong when he writes that "the Russian plan was understood to be to mobilize if and when Austria actually moved against Serbia." He cites no references here; nor does Grey cite any such qualification. On the 26th when Grey and Nicolson sent out the conference proposal they knew (B. D.,

XI, 139) that "preliminary preparations for mobilization" in Russia were to begin on the 25th, and that the mobilization of 1,100,000 men was to be ordered when Sazonov wanted it (B. D., XI, 125). Not till the 27th (B. D., XI, 170) did Grey learn that Russian partial mobilization would be ordered on the day "on which Austrian army entered Serbia."[1] Schmitt, then, is quite in the wrong when he aserts that it was understood in London on the 26th —when the conference proposal was sent out—that Russia would mobilize "if and when Austria actually moved against Serbia." Grey's view on the 25th was that in a "very short time Austria and Russia will both have mobilized against each other" (B. D., XI, 112), *i.e.*, regardless of whether Austria attacked Serbia or not. Schmitt's attempted justification of Grey's reckless policy is, therefore, erroneous, illogical and very misleading. No wonder he fails to cite references to support it.

In brief, Schmitt's desire to whitewash Grey has led him to accept Grey's assertion in his memoirs that he would "give or get guarantees that there would be no mobilizations during the conference." When Grey follows this with an extravaganza about the "honourable peace" and "peace with honour" that would result from the conference, Schmitt copies this out (I, 47), as though the contemporary documents showed that there would be no mobilizations. What kind of peace would have been established under the pressure of Russian mobilization is

[1] Schmitt has introduced this statement at another place (II, 31, note 1).

not easy to see; but it is clear that it would not be "honourable."

In this most unsatisfactory manner does Schmitt try to get around plain facts in British policy. Nor is he any more objective or sound in his discussion of Grey's proposals of July 29-31 (II, 159-160, 257-262, 279-293). He fails to note that Grey's suggestion of "Halt in Belgrade" on July 29th would allow Russia to mobilize (II, 159-160). He also fails to note that Grey's proposal of July 30, asking Russia for the "suspension of further military preparations" was the result of Bethmann's telegram (K. D., 409) of the morning of July 30th. Because of his mistranslation of *Aufmarsch* he fails to connect the two and thinks that Bethmann was "hardly playing fair with Sir Edward Grey" (II, 189) and that Grey combined one of Sazonov's insincere formulas with the "Halt in Belgrade" formula (II, 261). He does admit that this was the first British "appeal to Russia to stay her hand" but he thinks that the reason was that "Germany was at last willing to coöperate" (II, 261) instead of the real reason (1) that Bethmann had shown him and the British Cabinet quite clearly that he must change his whole policy and hold Russia back if the "Halt in Belgrade" formula were to be acceptable to Austria; (2) the internal situation, particularly in the cabinet.

In introducing Grey's "reversal of policy" on July 30th, Schmitt quotes long heavily moralistic extracts from Grey's memoirs about the military forces" being in charge in Berlin (II, 257-258), about the

sad effects of Germany's rejection of his (trick) conference (II, 258) and about Grey's feeling of 1925 as to how he felt on July 30, 1914, when he received the German bid for British neutrality. (II, 258-259). Next one actually finds contemporary material —Grey's 1914 rejection of the German bid and his Locarno-like evasion of Bethmann's suggestion (II, 259-260). This refreshing touch, however, is immediately spoiled by reversion to Grey's child-like gush of 1925—"'What I had written,' he says, 'represented my own feeling and my last hope'" (II, 260).

The proper introduction to Grey's "reversal of policy" is most of the material about British hesitations on July 28-31, transplanted to a later position by Schmitt (II, 280-286). If it had been put in its proper place, before the German bid for British neutrality (II, 258-260), that bid would have seemed quite apt and natural. The British descriptions of it as "infamous" (II, 154, Asquith), discreditable (II, 259, note, Crowe) and dishonorable (II, 259, Grey) would have appeared in all their true Babbittry.[2] Instead of this, the reader is treated to Grey's later gushings as though they represented contemporary realities—Grey examined the German bid "with such thoughts in his mind" (II, 258).

The German bid for British neutrality was quite a natural and fitting diplomatic move, in view of the vacillation of the British cabinet. Its suggestion of a "general neutrality agreement" (II, 154) was re-

[2] Schmitt's idea of impartiality is evident in his failure to produce any talk of dishonor in connection with the British bid for German neutrality (II, 321, note 2) or the Russian bid for Austrian neutrality (II, 332, note 5).

jected by Grey in the same way he rejected most German proposals—particularly about the Bagdad Railroad—by suggesting that it be widened to include the other powers. If Grey had really been interested in the question of aggression he would never have attempted, by his mediation and conference proposals, to place the Central Powers before the alternative of yielding on a vital matter or being crushed by the Russian steam-roller.[3] But to Schmitt, this widening of the neutrality agreement was an idea that was "new in European diplomacy and finally triumphed in the Treaties of Locarno eleven years later" (II, 260). He does not notice that it was a reply to and an evasion of Bethmann's suggestion.

It is also interesting to note how thoroughly confounded in Schmitt's mind are the assertions of Grey in 1925 with the records of 1914. In the footnote to Grey's moralistic ruminations of 1925 about the German rejection of the conference one actually reads, "On this same day, 30 July, William II was writing . . ." (II, 258, note 2), as though the two statements were absolutely contemporaneous. And in the text, following the quotation from the memoirs of 1925, one reads, "With such thoughts in

[3]Nor would he have brought Britain into the war after he learned of Russian general mobilization. The Locarno Treaty of 1925 entrusts to British judgment the question of which side was the aggressor. One wonders whether Schmitt would have been so enthusiastic about Locarno if he realized the non-moral attitude of Grey in 1914. One also wonders whether Professor Shotwell would define the aggressor in quite the same way if he understood the nature and purpose of Grey's conference and mediation proposals.

his mind Sir Edward Grey was confronted on the morning of 30 July . . ." (II, 258).[4]

The discussion of Grey's manœuvres on July 31st seems equally unsatisfactory (II, 279-293). The description of British hesitations conflicts violently with his slurs at German statesmen for not foreseeing that Britain would enter the war (I, 322-324). "The hands of the foreign secretary were effectively tied" (II, 282) and "British policy, far more than that of any other country, had to be guided and determined by events" (II, 283) are two typically careless statements here. Grey did an extraordinary amount of damage in encouraging Russia to mobilize, in telling Russia and France of British decisions about the fleet and in refraining altogether from counsels of moderation to France—a great deal more than could a man whose hands "were effectively tied." Nor was British policy determined by events except for the actual date of entrance into the war.

And what more than attempting to fool his own cabinet as well as the Germans is involved in Grey's suggestion on the 31st that "if Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward" showing that the Central Powers were peaceful and "Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it," Britain "would have nothing to do with the consequences"? (II, 289). What Schmitt neglects here is

[4]In two places Schmitt quotes without correction Grey's prejudiced views on the origins of the war of 1870 (II, 41, note 1; 136, note 1), the latter being Grey's childish prattle about "Prussian militarism" availing itself "of this time and season of the year at which to strike."

the fact that the Germans had already put forward such a proposal, the "Halt in Belgrad" proposal. There was, consequently, no point to Grey's remark. Of course, the vital part about the suspension of "further military operations or preparations" is relegated to the footnotes (II, 290, note 1). Surely a little less unscientific faith in Grey's good faith would make this picture more realistic.

Schmitt also fails to understand Grey's "disinterestedness" in the Austro-Serbian dispute, at the same time that he adopted the view that Russia must not be offended by extreme action on the part of Austria. Underlying all of Grey's proposals, except the last, (July 20, direct Austro-Russian conversations; July 24-25, mediation; July 26-28, conference; July 28, direct conversations; July 29, Halt in Belgrade) lay the assumption that Russia had a right to intervene in the Serbian dispute. If Austria could satisfy Russia, then Grey would be satisfied. If Austria could not satisfy Russia, then Grey would support Russia. He used the harshness of the Austrian ultimatum as a pretext for supporting Russia fully. Schmitt, of course, takes seriously Grey's judgment of July 24th on the ultimatum (I, 1, 477), a judgment that was meant for political use at home and abroad. From July 24th to July 30th, Grey's policy was to get Russian mobilization as a method of forcing Austria to yield to Russia. This would then be the "honourable" peace that Grey talks so much about and Schmitt copies off (II, 47).

In the "Coming of the War" Grey's subordina-

tion of British policy to Russia is described in these curious words: "Obviously Sir Edward Grey was trying to approach the problem without prejudice and as a good European" (I, 427); he was "not prejudiced in favor of Serbia" as his *Memoirs* (1925) show (I, 425); "Hopeless, then, was the German expectation that British diplomacy would exert itself to localize the war" (I, 492); the conference proposal "was based on the stern fact that in all human probability Russia did propose to interfere if Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia" (II, 47) just as though that "human probability" was not dependent upon Franco-British support; the July 29th proposal was "very similar to the 'Halt in Belgrad'" proposal, without mention of the fact that Grey's proposal would still let Russia mobilize (II, 159). Grey's "reversal of policy" on July 30-31 to a policy of preventing Russian mobilization receives no proper comment (II, 257-260), and Bertie's vigorous warnings of July 25-27 against supporting pan-Slavic policy are passed over by Schmitt as by Grey (II, 10-11, 14, note 1).

Nor is Schmitt's understanding of Grey's manipulation of parliament and cabinet what it should be. He describes Grey's speech of August 3 as a "masterly performance" (II, 398) without noting the tricks employed by the prophet of Locarno to induce Parliament to ratify his most clever but also most unconstitutional procedure. Nor is Schmitt aware of Grey's tricky management of his own cabinet. He writes that the "issue" of participation in a conti-

nental war was "left open for the cabinet to decide" (I, 50, note 3) just as though Grey, Nicolson and Crowe had not decided the matter already before the cabinet was consulted. Nor is Schmitt aware of the bogus nature of Grey's various peace proposals that were meant to fool the cabinet as well as the Germans. The significance of the coöperation of army, navy and foreign officials in opposition to the majority of the cabinet entirely escapes his notice.[5]

Taken as a whole, Schmitt's account of Grey's policy is one of the most unscientific performances in modern historical literature.

(D) Schmitt has surrendered so completely to British views that he quotes not only Grey's but also Asquith's and Churchill's memoirs as though they were contemporary documents. Perhaps most illuminating, however, is his acknowledgment that his judgment of events up through July 24th agrees with that of Crowe (I, 429).

His surrender to the suspicions of Crowe and Nicolson is clearly shown in one bad misjudgment. The British attempt to learn German intentions in regard to Belgium is described as a very clever move that would reveal German war plans (II, 293, 319) whatever Germany answered, although the failure to answer would mean nothing to a neutral diplomat —or historian.

(E) According to Schmitt, the testimony of Jagow

[5] Churchill's "naval holiday"; the military and naval conventions with Belgium, France and Russia, 1906-1914; keeping the fleet ready (July 26th) and mobilizing it without the consent of the cabinet; Churchill's most ambiguous orders about the "Breslau" and the "Goeben" on July 30th, etc.

is to be ruled out altogether because of the fact that he told some diplomatic lies during the crisis (II, 65, 74). But Grey also, and also necessarily, told many lies—about Anglo-Russian naval negotiations, about his knowledge of the probable terms of the ultimatum, about the state of preparedness of the British fleet (to Lichnowsky), about his disinterestedness in the Austro-Serbian quarrel, about his desire for peace when proposing the mediation and conference schemes, etc. They would be enough to rule out Grey's memoirs also, if Schmitt had a single instead of a double standard.

II. Anti-German Bias

The anti-German bias in "The Coming of the War" reeks of the intellectually foul propaganda of 1914. That German policy was dominated by military men, that these men and the diplomats went ahead recklessly in 1914—it is all too silly for detailed repetition.

Suffice it to say that the chief prop of Schmitt's argument about military domination in Germany[6] is a grossly mistranslated excerpt from Moltke's letter to Conrad; that one of his chief proofs that Bethmann was trying to deceive Grey is based on a sad mistranslation of *Aufmarsch* and that his whole story of German attempts to deceive Britain in regard to moderating advice to Vienna is knocked into a cocked hat by Rumbold's repetition of Zim-

[6] In addition to Grey's 1925 memoirs and the ridiculous comments of Crowe in 1914.

mermann's frank statement on July 26th that the German government "did not see their way to going beyond" the communication of British views to Vienna (B. D., XI, 149); that Schmitt's view (II, 167 and *passim)* that Germany was willing to have a Continental war provided Great Britain stayed out and that nearly every German peace move can be interpreted as an attempt to placate the British is seen to be silly when one reads Goschen's telegram to Grey relating that Bethmann "was so taken up with the news" about Russian general mobilization "that he made no remarks whatever upon your communication" (B. D., XI, 336), that is, upon Grey's refusal to agree to stay neutral;[7] that the remarks about Germany "frantically urging" Austria on to war with Serbia (II, 65) lose all their force when one remembers (a) that most of the material on which Schmitt bases his wild judgment comes from Szögyény's unreliable telegrams (II, 3-5, 72-73), (b) that the Austrian ministerial councils of July 7th and 19th had decided that a Serbian rejection of the ultimatum would be followed by war, (c) that the Austrian foreign office decided for immediate war on the 26th (II, 5, note 2) and (d) that Conrad thought a declaration of war superfluous because of the certainty of early border conflicts (II, 4); that Schmitt's theory that Bethmann was forced to declare war by Moltke's plan for seizing Liége and by Conrad's desire to know by August 1 whether

[7] Schmitt professes surprise that Bethmann did not take seriously Grey's bogus "Locarno" policy (II, 263).

Russia would fight or not—that this theory is based on gross misunderstandings of Conrad's and Moltke's plans and runs directly counter to many clear unmistakable documents on Bethmann's policy; that Schmitt admits (II, 65, 166, 171) that Bethmann and Jagow would be considered sincere in their efforts to prevent a continental war if they had not done certain things which turn out to be quite normal, peaceful manœuvres, misunderstood only by Schmitt.

Schmitt's confusion in regard to German policy may best be illustrated by four examples: (a) In prewar diplomacy, Germany is represented as pursuing three distinct aims in her foreign policy (I, 44-46) and yet as having "no definite policy" (I, 45); (b) the account of July 5-6th, in which the mistranslation of *eventuel*[8] makes "possible action against Serbia" into certain action (I, 306); (c) the confusion of "likely" and "certain" in German views on July 28th as to the probability of a European war (II, 131); (d) the warping of Russian general into partial mobilization (II, 9-266) and their effects on German action.

All the way through both volumes, one finds suspicion and exaggeration in the account of German motives. (I, 13, 17, 18, 28, 30-33, 38, 40-43, 45-46, 54-55, 69-74, 92, 167-172, 276-280, 287-288, 303, 307, 309-316, 320, 324-325, 329, 383, 399, 401, 526; II, 57, 62, 66-67, 71, 74-75, 121, 126, 128-131, 135, 141-143, 146, 148, 155, 170-172, 186-187,

[8] Similarly with the Conrad-Moltke story, I, 15.

192-198, 198-199, 201, 204-205, 209, 211, 212-213, 263, 265, 269-272, 276-278, 325-326, 333, etc.) Mistranslations, dislocations and omissions of evidence, bad logic, obscure English and emotional cadenzas heighten the effect of the suspicions.

III. Style

Nothing betrays a writer's prejudices so readily as his style. In "The Coming of the War" the English style varies from naïve sentimentality about Grey through sensationalistic exaggeration about Liége and Conrad to shifty evasiveness in dealing with reprehensible acts of the Entente.

Whenever Schmitt comes upon an aggressive statement or act of the Entente Powers, he calls it "frankness"; if the Austrians and Germans disregard that aggressive statement or act, they are "stupid." Thus "Russia had decided, and announced, that she would resist by force any attempt on the part of the Dual Monarchy to diminish or unduly humiliate Serbia. France had proclaimed her solidarity with Russia" (I, 457). When the Entente Powers wanted to force Austria-Hungary to accept a "diplomatic defeat at the hands of the Entente" and threatened to make a European war in case of refusal, why, "they had endeavored to make clear what were likely to be the consequences of a refusal" (I, 518). As for the Russian general mobilization that precipitated the conflict, she had "announced at the very beginning that she would not tolerate an invasion of Serbia; when her warning was disre-

garded, she was as good as her word" (II, 256). Thus the precipitation of the World War turns out to be a frank act of moral integrity!

As for the Austrians and Germans, they were merely stupid not to recognize the firmness and sincerity of purpose of the Entente. Did the German Chancellor think that France would restrain Russia in the interests of peace? (II, 10). Well, his "preconceived picture of French sentiment and policy was instantly proved erroneous" (II, 21). If the Austrians and Germans "expected that the French Government would seek to restrain its ally, they were completely mistaken" (I, 511). Did Russia declare as early as the 25th of July, that "secure of the support of France, she will face all the risks of war"—the comment of Schmitt is that the "German Ambassador was living in a fool's paradise" when he thought that Russia would "temporize" (I, 503). Finally, when talking of Grey's refusal to restrain Russia—using the stiffness of the Austrian ultimatum as a pretext—the chief comment is, "Hopeless, then, was the German expectation that British diplomacy would exert itself to localize the war" (I, 492).

The Central Powers, then, were stupid not to recognize the loyalty of the Entente Powers—loyalty to each other and to Russia's announced intentions, certainly not loyalty to world peace.

In dealing with pre-war diplomacy, Schmitt indulges in the following characteristically emotionalized expressions, each one of them conveying a false

impression of the situation. The complicated Balkan tangle was "surprisingly simple" in the summer of 1914 (I, 173); "When Germany came to bestride Europe like a colossus, thereby upsetting the ancient equilibrium" (I, 69). "Nothing could be more specific" than the Conrad-Moltke agreement—grossly mistranslated (I, 17-18). Great Britain urges Russia to develop a huge army on the German border—"M. Izvolski, for his part, was equally cautious" (I, 39). Entente coöperation was caused by the conviction "of the dangerous reality of German militarism" (I, 46). The British general staff "wished to" send the British army to Belgium (I, 34, note 2). Alone in Europe, "one man" (Grey!) "had a vision of a new order" (I, 56). "The Russian programme was crystal-clear" (I, 88). "M. Sazonov was apparently not unwilling to take" the risk of a war with Germany and Austria (I, 97). Aehrenthal's program of avoiding war with Serbia contained "golden words of elementary wisdom!" (I, 121). William II "began to play with the idea of using force" (I, 170).

"Hapsburg's Hour" (Ch. IV) and "Hohenzollern's Bond" (Ch. V) are then embellished with the following: "the iron-clad formula" of Conrad that "was followed to the letter exactly one year later" (I, 272), "certain sensational and perplexing incidents" in the funeral of the Archduke (I, 280-283), "if Russia were itching for an excuse to make war" (I, 287), "First in order of time, first in degree of authority among all his countrymen, the German

Emperor . . ." (I, 296), William II "faced the prospect of a European war without hesitation" (I, 303), "the action of the German Government, then, is perfectly clear" . . . "a complete *volte-face*" (I, 316-317), "French sentiment still remembered the lost provinces" (I, 326), "the German Government was not greatly concerned whether war . . . came or not," and its leaders "were the *first* responsible statesmen to take decisions which might have the most dire consequences" and "it was they who took the gambler's plunge" (I, 329).

Then one reads of an Austrian decision for "the application of brute force" (I, 345); "the results of the investigation at Sarajevo were doled out gradually, in order to whet the popular appetite" . . . (I, 369); "the Austro-Hungarian statesmen and generals were not greatly concerned about what Russia might do" (I, 372); "stupidity, which is unpardonable in politics" (I, 375), "responsibility is measured by the success or failure of the throw" (I, 375), "the duping of Europe seems to have been eminently successful" (I, 389); "the Entente governments felt that they had been tricked" (I, 393); "the German Government considered the policy of France to be eminently pacific" (I, 399); Jagow sent Ballin to London "to intimidate the British Government into accepting the Austrian programme" (I, 401); Austria and Germany agreed "to ignore the solemn stipulation of the treaty" (I, 402); "the Italian Government seems to have had an instinctive feeling" (I, 404); the Austrians

"knew they had the Germans at their mercy" (I, 407); Grey's sentiments about the assassination were expressed in "elevated and obviously sincere words" (I, 415); "the Triple Entente made no effort to conceal" its views (I, 416); Grey "was ready to play fair" (I, 426); the "hints" of the Russian government early in July were "clear-cut and concordant" (I, 442); if any power "chose to ignore" the Russian "warning, the fault was not Russia's" (I, 446); M. Hartwig was "commonly credited with inciting Serbian hatred of Austria-Hungary" (I, 467); "what the Serbian Government did or did not do probably made no difference" (I, 471); the Austrian "note, the most fateful document of our time" (I, 474); Grey's condemnation of the Austrian note has "commanded general assent" (I, 477); "up to the last minute" Grey and Lichnowsky "seized upon every chance that was offered to put in a word for peace" (I, 516), "Crowe was right in suspecting the German Government of duplicity" (I, 524); the Serbians "almost piteously besought" the Tsar to help them (I, 531); "by general consent" the Serbian reply was conciliatory (I, 535); the Serbian reply was "a conciliatory overture which conceded nine-tenths" of the Austrian demands (I, 539).

"Russia was to be threatened into submission" (II, 2); Schoen's awkwardness "created the deepest suspicion" in Paris (II, 15); the Russian "court, the foreign office, and the army" "were all anxious for a pacific solution" (II, 27); Russian diplomacy

on July 26-28 "was conciliatory, at least outwardly" (II, 33); the idea of war was "abhorrent" to Grey as shown by his "straightforward language devoid of diplomatic subtleties" (II, 33); "one cannot read the dispatches and telegrams" of Grey "without feeling the sincerity and earnestness" (II, 33); Grey "deemed Austria-Hungary to be in the wrong" and "was not disposed to exert pressure on Russia" (II, 35); Churchill's narrative "implies" that Ballin's mission created the "worst suspicions" in London (II, 39-40); "Sir Edward Grey's good faith is not open to doubt" but one of his acts was "of doubtful wisdom" (II, 42); Moltke's drafting of the ultimatum to Belgium on the 26th was "of the greatest significance" (II, 59); "but the duplicity of Herr von Jagow reveals once more the anxiety of the German Government lest Austria-Hungary find some excuse for not taking the final plunge to which Berlin was frantically urging her" (II, 65); "Lichnowsky understood perfectly" (II, 69); Bethmann's move was "a slippery trick to throw dust in the eyes of Sir Edward Grey (II, 71); "The course adopted by" Bethmann "was not honorable" (II, 75); Grey "'really felt angry'" (II, 118); Bethmann "apparently believed war . . . likely" and Moltke and Falkenhayn "likewise regarded war as certain" (II, 131); "M. Sazonov had been begging for" German mediation at Vienna (II, 143); Germany went through Belgium "in order to have an easy road into France" (II, 149); Moltke's mention of roads in the ultimatum to Belgium was "highly significant"

(II, 150); the German bid for British neutrality "was to destroy all confidence in Herr von Bethmann's professions of a desire for peace" (II, 153); Bethmann "received staggering news from London" (II, 156); if Germany rejected the Austrian request, "the reproach would be justified that Germany was unwilling to afford that diplomatic support which might spare the Dual Monarchy the necessity of waging war with Russia" (II, 168); "secret orders may have been issued" to the Austrian armies (II, 184, note 2); Bethmann "was hardly playing fair with" Grey (II, 189); "the chief of staff was not the subordinate of the chancellor" (II, 198); "this is of course sheer speculation" (II, 206); "the ministers agreed then and there to order general mobilization" (II, 213-214); "French diplomacy was passive" (II, 223); if France had not supported Russia, there would have been no war but it would have been "a peace established by threats" (II, 229), and even without French declaration of support "the Russian action would doubtless have been the same" (II, 236); "law, so far as there was any, sustained the Russian contention" that she could mobilize if she saw fit (II, 253); "the responsibility for the Russian mobilization rests" "as much upon" the Austrians "and their refusal to make any genuine concessions, as upon the shiftiness of M. Sazonov" (II, 255-256); Russian general mobilization "was the logical and the only reply possible" to the Austro-German attempt "to overawe and even to terrorize Europe" (II, 256); Russia threatened to

make war and "she was as good as her word" (II, 256); Grey's nonsense of July 30th "was new in European diplomacy and finally triumphed in the Treaties of Locarno eleven years later" (II, 260); Bethmann "was trying to destroy British confidence in Russian good faith" (II, 277); "although the charge cannot be proved, it does look as if the German chancellor was guilty of deliberate misrepresentation" to the British (II, 278); "the hands of the foreign secretary (Grey) were effectively tied" (II, 282); "the *German* doctrine that 'mobilization meant war' was well understood" (II, 302. Italics mine); France was aroused by "the indications of a secret semi-mobilization of the German army" (II, 303); "Germany could not allow the (military) situation to develop normally" (II, 320); "Moltke's graphic account reveals only too clearly how determined he was to have war with France" (II, 345-346); Belgian divisions were stationed at Ghent and Antwerp, "as if to repel a British landing" (II, 385); "the Belgian reply was as manly a document as one government ever addressed to another" (II, 389); "the conduct of Belgium herself was above reproach" (II, 394); the "'scrap of paper' was a winged phrase which captured the imagination of the world" (II, 407); the German Government "needed to win the confidence of the Entente Powers in its professions of Austro-Hungarian disinterestedness" (II, 481).

Such is the grandiose, moralizing, melodramatic and forced style in which this book is written. No

wonder many of the reviewers call the style "superb" and "lucid." It betrays throughout the emotional overtones of a writer straining to justify the Entente mythology.

IV. Straddles

How easily Schmitt's prejudices sway him back and forth can be seen if one checks up his different accounts of the same matter at different places.

In the discussion of pre-war diplomacy there are a number of examples. At one place Schmitt is trying to show that German foreign policy alarmed the Entente, hence he makes out a very definite foreign policy for Germany (I, 44-46) and in the midst of the discussion when he wants to explain why Germany made no compromises with the Entente (fleet, Bagdad, Morocco!!) he declares that the German foreign office "had no definite policy" (I, 45). In another case he explains that Russia encouraged Serbia and the Balkan League as tools for breaking up Austria-Hungary (I, 128-131) and that Russia planned to take the Straits (I, 82-102), but elsewhere says that Russian policy was "the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans" (I, 143). In a third case Germany is represented as accepting Grey's dishonest denial of Anglo-Russian naval negotiations when Schmitt is trying to prove Grey honest ("disingenuous, though true") (I, 52, note 4), whereas elsewhere the Germans are represented as rejecting Grey's denial when Schmitt wants to prove them reckless in July, 1914 (I, 323).

In dealing with July 5-6 Schmitt executes a char-

acteristic straddle. He wants to have Berchtold bent on war with Serbia and so describes his policy (I, 140, 272-273); but then he also wants to lay the chief blame for Austrian policy on German shoulders so he accepts a most doubtful statement of Hoyos, made years later, to the effect that Berchtold would have been content with a peaceful solution if Berlin had so advised (I, 275).

Likewise, the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia is depicted as unacceptable (I, 478) when Schmitt wants to condemn Austria-Hungary and acceptable when he wants to prove that Hartwig was not such a fire-eater after all (I, 469) and acceptable when he wants to prove Germany reckless (II, 63).

It will be recalled that in Szögyény's celebrated telegram of July 27, a great deal depends upon whether the pronoun *demselben* refers to Austria or to England. At one place (II, 73) Schmitt makes it refer to Austria, in order to prove Jagow and Bethmann insincere, whereas two pages below (II, 75) he finds it more convenient to make the word refer to England in order to prove that Bethmann and Jagow were deceiving England.

In dealing with the repeated Austrian requests to Germany to declare herself against Russian partial mobilization, Schmitt is embarrassed by the repeated German refusals because they wreck his *bordereau*. To explain the Austrian repetition of the requests, in spite of the German refusals, Schmitt says that the German *rejection* of the first Austrian request would, if known to Conrad, "have strengthened

Conrad's hand (II, 132, note); but later the second German rejection is turned into an acceptance and this *acceptance* now put the game into Berchtold's hands (II, 176-177). In the same way, the second Austrian request for a German declaration is said to have ruined the prospects of Austrian acceptance of the "Halt in Belgrad" formula for if Bethmann rejected the Austrian request (as he had done, be it noted) then Austria would have an argument against the "Halt in Belgrad" proposal (II, 168), and if Bethmann accepted it he would offend England (II, 167-168) to whom Bethmann dared not confess that he was trying to keep Russia from mobilizing on the Austrian frontier (II, 189). In either case, then, Schmitt has Bethmann on the horns of a dilemma, both horns being imaginary.

In the case of Conrad's difficulties, Schmitt has Conrad under the imperative necessity of knowing by *August 1* whether he could count on Germany's waging war on Russia or not (II, 132, 168, 176) so that he may say that Bethmann "would probably be constrained for strictly military reasons, to declare war on Russia on 1 August" (II, 168) and that Bethmann decided on the night of July 30th for an ultimatum to Russia (II, 209). But later he calmly quotes Conrad's statement that he should have been informed on *July 30th,* when he wants to show that Moltke thought war inevitable on the 29th (II, 271, note).

For William II, Schmitt has a special aversion. He overemphasizes his rôle throughout the two vol-

umes. He even indulges in a triple straddle in order to prove something on the German ruler. In one place he uses William II's judgment as a "conclusive" argument that the Serbian reply was satisfactory (I, 538); in another place he declares that that same judgment was inspired by bad news from London (II, 122); and before the Chicago Literary Club he described William II as a man who could "believe at any moment what pleased or suited him," thus discrediting all of William II's judgments.

As for Russian general mobilization Schmitt does the honors due its importance by perpetrating a quintuple straddle. The question under discussion was what caused anxiety in Berlin on the 30th, particularly, to the German military men? Schmitt admits later that the true cause of anxiety was the "military measures Russia was taking in Poland and the Baltic provinces" (II, 211), after he has launched the German "decision for war" (II, 199); elsewhere the anxiety is said to be over Russian partial mobilization (II, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191-192, 198, 199, 202, 209), when the "decision for war" is regarded as the result of Conrad's pressure; or else solely Liége (II, 191), or Liége and Conrad (II, 209); or German fear lest Austria would not proclaim general mobilization and then "the German mobilization could not follow" (II, 208).

To such bewildering straddles there is no adequate comment. Perhaps a quotation from Schmitt's description of William II before the Chicago Literary Club will describe Schmitt's difficulties better

than anything else. "I realized," said Professor Schmitt, "that William II possessed the capacity to believe at any moment what pleased or suited him, that he was a highly emotional personality whose reflexes could not be gauged by ordinary standards, and that I was not likely to secure from him any positive or satisfactory information."[9] This reads like a most exact description of Schmitt, himself, as he exposes the workings of his mind in the above-mentioned straddles.

V. Conclusion

What one finds, then, in "The Coming of the War" is an elaborate, prejudiced defense of the Entente statesmen and their policies. For the Entente and the Central Powers, Schmitt has different standards. He must whitewash the Entente and blacken the Central Powers. The style betrays a mind attuned to the romantic ravings of the Entente in 1914. The straddles on display in this book show that no amount of contrary evidence can check his prejudices.

[9] Schmitt's speech was reprinted by the Club, "Interviewing the Authors of the War," Chicago, 1930, pp. 41. It contains this prefatory remark, "This paper is based on confidential conversations and is privately printed. It is respectfully requested that no publicity be given to it or its contents." But the speech was printed and distributed to various history departments; printed and distributed material, however "confidential," has no privileges.

CHAPTER VII

July 30th in Berlin

THE crucial part of "The Coming of the War," the one on which its chief influence must depend, is the section dealing with German policy on July 30th (II, 186-213). All the arguments of the earlier part of the book lead up to the German "decision for war" on the 30th; on this "decision" the remaining arguments in the book depend.

The problem before Schmitt in this section is to work out a German "decision for war" before the final Russian decision for general mobilization was known officially in Berlin, that is, before noon of July 31st. He must have this mythical decision otherwise the Entente would be saddled with the responsibility for the war. But let Schmitt "prove" his case.

The first point to notice here is the skittishness of the style. In this section Schmitt seems desperately afraid of committing himself to his own adventurous speculations. "So far, then, as one can see" . . . (II, 191), "But whatever the exact hour of agreement" (II, 198-199), "this is of course sheer speculation" (II, 206), "The guess may therefore be ventured" (II, 192), "It is by no means impossible that" (II, 192), "the stories, while not authenticated, may be true" (II, 194), "The hypothesis is interesting" . . .

"but again there is no proof" (II, 195), "What seems probable therefore," "This seems to indicate" (II, 198), "The circumstances under which this decision was reached are not altogether clear" (II, 201), "as it would seem" (II, 202), "it is said" (II, 208), "No one can say" (II, 212—the frequent use of such ambiguous phraseology at critical points in the narrative leaves the reader with the feeling that this section of the book contains altogether too much "sheer speculation."

But let us examine the section in detail. "Bethmann-Hollweg," writes Schmitt, "now regarded war as practically unavoidable" (II, 186, July 30). Previously he had stated that Bethmann "apparently believed war, that is, a European war likely" on the 28th and Moltke and Falkenhayn "likewise regarded war as certain" (II, 130-131), whatever the confusion of "likely" and "certain" may mean; on the 29th "Bethmann regarded war as unavoidable" (II, 143); on the evening of the 29th "Bethmann also thought war inevitable" . . . (II, 148); "when he heard of the Russian partial mobilization (evening, 29th), he considered war unavoidable" (II, 155). Yet, in spite of this alleged belief in the unavoidability of war, the Chancellor's steps to admonish Russia provided "a chance . . . to arrange a settlement" and his six telegrams to Vienna on the night of July 29-30 were sent "in order to prevent a European war" (II, 167). How a man who "believed war inevitable" could telegraph to Russia and

Austria proposals that if accepted would preserve the peace is quite difficult to see.

Now if Bethmann believed war inevitable, why did he not take the obvious step of getting Germany ready for the war by military measures? To this question Schmitt gives two more or less contradictory answers. One is that Bethmann "would not face the fact squarely" on the 28th (II, 131) and "would not face the consequences of his political blunders" on the 30th (II, 211). This explanation is sufficiently intangible and unprovable to serve as a main argument in "The Coming of the War"; but Schmitt spoils the effect by giving another reason for Bethmann's failure to take the logical military measures. This time he implies that Bethmann *was willing* to take military measures; but "if there were any prospect of British neutrality" . . . "he would resist the soldiers until he had secured Count Berchtold's acceptance of the *Halt in Belgrad,* which would enable him to saddle Russia with the responsibility for the war" (II, 155). To see how unsatisfactory this answer is, one has only to remember that Bethmann learned on the night of the 29th the "staggering news" (II, 156) that had a "staggering effect" (II, 161) that Britain would not remain neutral. On the 30th, then, Bethmann knew Britain would not remain neutral (II, 187); if Schmitt's theory were sound, Bethmann should have ordered "threatening danger of war" on the night of the 29th to 30th. But Schmitt's theory is unsound; for Bethmann did

not agree to "threatening danger of war" until after noon of July 31st.

Schmitt, then, advances two reasons in explanation of the fact that Bethmann refused to allow extensive military measures in Germany even when he considered war inevitable (July 28-30th). Of these two reasons, one is vague and the other is contrary to well-established facts. One may therefore be allowed to suspect what other facts indicate, namely, that Bethmann did not think war inevitable on July 28-30th and that Schmitt is indulging in strained argumentation to bolster up an impossible assertion.

Well, then, on the 30th we find that Bethmann "now *(sic)* regarded war as practically *(sic)* unavoidable" (II, 186); "Because he saw little *(sic)* hope of preventing war" (II, 186), "Convinced that the war was about to break" (II, 187), in senseless repetition as though merely saying it often enough would make it true. To be sure he notes Bethmann as saying "about noon" on the 30th that *"he would not give up his hopes and efforts for the maintenance of peace,* so long as his *demarche* at Vienna had not been rejected" (II, 186); but the mere fact that Bethmann stated the contrary at the time (not noon, but 5-7 P.M.) proves nothing to Schmitt. Did not Bethmann telegraph to Sweden *(sic)* that . . . "England will very *soon* take part in *the* war on the side of the Dual Alliance" (II, 187)? No, he did not! A reference to the document (K. D. No. 406) shows that he telegraphed . . . "England will very *quickly* take part in war"—*i.e.,* once war breaks

out (Italics mine). The telegram proves nothing as to when the war would break out unless historians are allowed to mistranslate "schnell" into "soon" and *an Krieg* as though it were *am Kriege*. But one reads, "Most conclusive of all was the action taken with reference to Sweden" (II, 187).

The idea that Bethmann thought war inevitable at "noon" on the 30th, so contrary to his words and deeds, has not been proved.

But, assuming that it has been proved, Schmitt goes on to say that Bethmann's main interest in the pressure on Vienna to accept "Halt in Belgrad" and mediation was to "put Russia in the position of the guilty party" (II, 187, quoting K. D. 456). Proof—he asked "his master *(sic)* to continue the work of mediation" (II, 187). He sent a version of a telegram to "his master" who was to transmit it to the Tsar. Now the telegram itself would tend to promote peace, one part attempting to clear up a misunderstanding between Russia and Germany over some statements of the German ambassador—a part not quoted by Schmitt—and another part repeating the view that Russian mobilization against Austria threatened to ruin German mediation at Vienna. (K. D., Nos. 408 and 420.) Schmitt misinterprets this to mean that it was a reversion to his "original position" (forbidding Russian partial mobilization), for proof of which he cites his own book (II, 8), where one reads of Russian military measures aimed *"at us," i.e.,* at Germany, that is, *general* mobilization. This error is coupled with the serious omission of

"also" from the telegram of Bethmann to the Kaiser (K. D. 408); the chancellor wrote that the telegram "also will be an especially important document historically" (K. D., 408). The omission of "also" exaggerates the importance of the telegram (II, 187 and II, 188 note).[1] Then he mistranslates it—"make use of the expression" instead of "express"—and forgets that this document does not necessarily represent Bethmann's views at all. This is a diplomatic document, meant to induce William II to do a particular thing and must be read in this light. In the case of K. D. 408, then, Schmitt has made two serious omissions, one mistranslation, one gross error in referring to his own book and one flat misunderstanding of a diplomatic statement (II, 187-188). No wonder he is able to arrive at the point where he started—that Bethmann thought war inevitable.

The same blundering procedure appears on the following two pages. He announces that Bethmann on the 30th was trying to prevent Russia from partial mobilization and then says "nevertheless, he proceeded to give the contrary impression to the British government" (II, 188) and "he dared not tell Sir Edward Grey that he was asking Russia to stop mobilizing" (II, 189). That this "was hardly playing fair with" Grey, Schmitt proves by mistranslating *Aufmarsch* ("concentration") into *"advance"* and by interpreting it to mean "attack" (II, 189).

[1] Here, as in many other places, Schmitt is using the Carnegie translation that he has declared inaccurate! (I, 258, n. I). In most cases where his version differs from that of the Carnegie translation, one finds that he has altered the translation in an anti-German sense.

Thus Bethmann "deceives" Grey because Bethmann admonishes Russia against mobilization and asks Grey to do the same. Grey was not deceived; he accepted the German idea (B. D., XI, 309).

The comedy of errors continues. The Prussian Council of Ministers held at 5-7 P.M. on July 30th (K. D., new ed., 456, note 2) is said to have been held "at noon" (II, 190). The protocol of that meeting is treated to a reckless translation that passes the bounds of freedom allowed careful historians. On the second half of the page (II, 190), omissions involve a serious distortion. Schmitt is trying to prove that the protocol of this ministerial council "shows that there was not believed to be any immediate danger to Germany from the military measures of Russia and France" (II, 191). To reach this conclusion he omits the significant statement of Bethmann that "Russian (partial) mobilization had blocked" the steps taken by England and Germany to preserve peace. Bethmann implies that Russian military measures threatened to bring about a European war; Schmitt omits the sentences and concludes that the Russian measures did not alarm Germany.

Bethmann also gave the Russian explanation of her military preparations preceded by the sceptical word *"zwar"* ("indeed," "to be sure"), which Schmitt omits. Then, after describing Russian measures in unbelievably moderate terms, Bethmann goes on to explain how insignificant Austrian preparations were, implying that there was no need for the

Russian measures unless Russia desired war. This part Schmitt omits altogether (II, 190).

Finally, it should be pointed out that the protocol reads that "The measures taken in Russia as well as in France resembled (*etwa* "somewhat" omitted here) the 'proclamation of threatening danger of war' " in Germany (II, 190). Now, since the proclamation of "threatening danger of war" was very close to general mobilization, how could anyone escape the conclusion that French and Russian military preparations were believed to be an immediate danger to Germany?

Well, Schmitt has further "proof." On the morning of the 30th, Moltke telegraphed Conrad that "Russian (partial) mobilization not yet a reason for (German) mobilization" . . . which reads as though Russian measures were not menacing. But his last sentence to Conrad ran, "Do not declare war on Russia, but await the Russian attack"—which has a different ring (II, 191). However, this telegram of Moltke's was sent in the morning; by afternoon other news had arrived of Russian measures—against Germany—that caused Moltke to fly completely off the handle (cf II, 196-197).[2] Moltke now advised Conrad to mobilize at once—"every hour of delay makes the situation worse" (II, 196). Since this was sent at 5:30 P.M. on the 30th and the Prussian council of ministers was sitting *then,* not at noon, the interpretation put upon Russian military

[2]Schmitt's explanation of Moltke's actions is that Moltke wanted war and knew the Kaiser agreed with him that serious military measures must be taken (II, 198).

measures by Moltke reflects the fear felt in military circles at the news of Russian military measures: and this interpretation was that Russian-French military measures were an "immediate danger" to Germany.

Another indication of how worried the German military authorities were over Russian measures beyond partial mobilization is to be found in the report of the German general staff to the foreign office at 4 P.M. on July 30th (K. D., new ed., No. 431a). As this was printed in full only in the new edition of the Kautsky Documents in 1927, Schmitt seems to have missed it, though there is no excuse for such carelessness or for his missing reference to it in the literature since then.[8] In that report there is sufficient material to indicate that the German military officials, and hence the political, were greatly alarmed at the progress of Russian military measures beyond partial to general mobilization on the German border.

Schmitt later quotes a report received on the afternoon of July 30th that "indicated great military activity in Poland" (II, 207) and then admits that " 'threatening danger of war' in Germany would have been the logical reply to the military measures which Russia was taking in Poland and the Baltic provinces" (II, 211). That evidence belongs with the protocol of the ministerial council of the late afternoon of July 30th. The distortion involved in

[8] See *Kriegsschuldfrage*, V. 8, Aug. 1928, p. 761 and "Der Weg zur Freiheit," IX, 3, Feb. 1, 1929, p. 44. Later on Schmitt quotes some of these measures without indicating that they were known in Berlin in the early afternoon (II, 207).

misplacing evidence in this way is as patent as it is inexcusable.

But Professor Schmitt nonchalantly concludes that since Franco-Russian military measures were not worrying the Germans, "So far, then, as one can see, the only reason why the German military authorities should demand prompt decision on the question of 'threatening danger of war' lay in the Belgian measures which threatened to block the strategic gateway at Liége. In conformity, however, with the chancellor's attitude, no action was proposed or taken at the council with respect to this latter situation" (II, 191). Could vagary go further than this? The Prussian Council of Ministers meets and talks over Franco-Russian military measures that are just short of mobilization and war. At the same time Moltke becomes frantic with anxiety over the news from Russia. Therefore, Schmitt concludes that the Franco-Russian military measures were "not believed to be any immediate danger to Germany" and that the German military men were interested only in the news from Liége—which would be of importance only in case of a European war and which was not even mentioned at the council.

To "so far, then, as one can see" . . . Schmitt should have added "without looking at the sources."

Schmitt has now reached 1 P.M. on July 30th. There is a conference on, with Moltke, Falkenhayn, Tirpitz, and Bethmann present. Were Russian military measures threatening to Germany discussed? It is not known. But Schmitt assumes that they were

talking only of Russian partial mobilization. He states that "at 11:50 A.M. a telegram from Count Pourtalès reported the mobilization as a fact" (II, 191). But a glance at the telegram (K. D. No. 410) shows that Pourtalès assumed that the German government knew Russian partial mobilization was a fact. Indeed, no less than five documents in the German collection attest the fact that the German government took Russian partial mobilization to be a fact before 11:50 A.M. of the 30th (See K. D., Nos. 385, 399, 401, 408, 409; No. 385 was sent out at 12:30 A.M. on July 30). Hence, the conference at 1 P.M. on the 30th must have dealt with something beyond partial mobilization, doubtless with additional news of Russian measures on the German border such as were described in the General Staff's report of 4 P.M. (K. D., new ed., 431a), which Schmitt neglects. His error, again, is due to his anxiety to ascribe all Germany's actions to Russian *partial* mobilization.

The next point in Professor Schmitt's "proof" is that, "It is by no means impossible that the Emperor had been won over to the point of view of the soldiers" (II, 192). Then he wastes two whole pages on ridiculous evidence[4] only to conclude that the "stories" he relates "while not authenticated, may be true" (II, 194).

The *Lokal-Anzeiger's* premature pronouncement of German mobilization then gets two full pages

[4]Here he transforms "half-convincing" into "convincing," II, 193.

(II, 194-196) only to end in the remark that it "had no practical effect" (II, 196).

These four pages (II, 192-196) contain some of the feeblest evidence and lead to some of the most fatuous conclusions that war-guilt literature has to show. The sole purpose of this confused set of nonsensical suspicions is to prepare the reader's mind for the unprovable assertion that William II agreed with the soldiers that the "state of threatening danger of war" should be proclaimed (II, 198). The "proof" is that Moltke spoke rather aggressively to Bienerth, the Austro-Hungarian military attaché (II, 196-197), and also sent a telegram to Conrad during the night of July 30-31 urging Austria to decree general mobilization (II, 197). "What seems probable therefore is that Moltke"—who "was not the subordinate of the chancellor"!—"sent his message to Conrad in the knowledge that the Emperor agreed with him that the time had come to take serious military measures" . . . (II, 198).

The historical errors on these pages (II, 196-198) are almost too numerous to mention. (a) Bienerth's telegram is his own interpretation of Moltke's words (II, 196-197) and Moltke's own telegram says nothing of the *casus foederis* Schmitt talks about (II, 197-198). (b) Two bad mistranslations, sharpening the meaning. (c) "The advice to Vienna" is misleading; Moltke was advising Conrad. (d) Bienerth's statement that Moltke said that Austrian general mobilization would create the *casus foederis* for Germany is contrary to the oft-repeated

statements of Moltke that the collision between Russia and Austria would be the *casus foederis*.[5] The final test is what happened in Berlin when Austrian general mobilization was announced. Did Germany decide to mobilize? Not at all. Moltke tried to get Bethmann to agree to mobilization at 9 A.M. on the 31st and failed; the subject of discussion was not Austrian general mobilization but the *third* independent report of Russian general mobilization. This 9 A.M. conference on the 31st does not appear in Schmitt's volumes.[6] Thus the speculations about William II's agreement with the military men (II, 192-198) and about Moltke's invocation of the *casus foederis* (II, 197-198) simply fall flat.

Now we reach the German "decision for war" that Kanner and Schmitt think came on the 30th "on the basis of the Russian partial mobilization and at least twelve hours before news was received of Russian general mobilization" (II, 199). Here is the German "decision for war" that will confound the Revisionists and wreck their theory that Russian general mobilization precipitated the conflict. Let us see.

The argument in Schmitt is most obscure; only after hours of scrutiny can one penetrate the mystery. But the argument seems to be this: (A) Bethmann decided on the 30th to proclaim "threatening danger of war"; (B) but "threatening danger of

[5] See Conrad, I, 380, lines 3 and 4; I, 380, 5th line from bottom; I, 382, 5th par. January 1909; and Conrad, III, 146-147, Feb. 10, 1913; K. D., 349, July 28-29, 1914; Conrad, IV, 152, Moltke on morning of 30th July, 1914.

[6] Falkenhayn's diary as recorded in *Kriegsschuldfrage*, VI, 1928, p. 1063.

war" means mobilization; (C) mobilization means war; therefore, (D) Bethmann decided for war on the 30th. Very simple—except for the fact that A and B, and therefore D, are quite false.

Look first at B, "threatening danger of war" means mobilization. Schmitt produces as evidence (1) Bethmann's statement to the Council of Prussian ministers to that effect, (II, 199), but does not realize that Bethmann was exaggerating the dangers of the military men's plans.[7] (2) Falkenhayn's statement in the same council (K. D., 456), that "threatening danger of war" would allow calling out of reservists (II, 265); but this probably refers to reservists assigned to special duty on the railways, etc. Certainly it does not refer to calling out all reservists, as Schmitt implies; the official proclamation says nothing of reservists, who were not called out until August 1, the day mobilization was ordered.[8] (3) Bethmann's statement to Austria on July 31st, (K. D., 479) that "mobilization, it is to be expected, will follow (the proclamation) within 48 hours." Schmitt does not quote this but simply makes the statement that "Bethmann telegraphed to Vienna that Germany would mobilize within forty-eight hours" (II, 270), thus omitting the qualification "it is to be expected" *(voraussichtlich)* which conveyed the political prediction that Russia would probably refuse the German ultimatum and Germany would then have to mobilize. Both this telegram and (4) William II's

[7] Bethmann made the same statement to Lerchenfeld, presumably because he was repeating what he had said to the Council of Ministers. Dirr, p. 164.
[8] See *K. S. F.*, 1926, IV, 1, pp. 43-45.

telegram to Francis Joseph (K. D., 503) were intended to get Austria to turn her principal forces against Russia instead of continuing her offensive against Serbia, for it was probable that Russia would reject the German ultimatum. But Schmitt does not realize that these two telegrams were diplomatic documents (II, 266, 270) and rashly derives a *military principle* from their wording (II, 199, 266, 270). Upon these four none too certain statements, Schmitt bases his whole theory.

Against the theory there are numerous facts and statements. Bethmann's own statement on the 29th in a telegram to Paris (K. D., 341; actually quoted at II, 135) was that "the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' would not yet mean mobilization or the calling in of any reservists." Moreover, after the proclamation, Bethmann telegraphed to London, St. Petersburg, Paris and Rome (K. D., 488, 490, 491, 492) that mobilization would follow the proclamation "in case" Russia did not agree to demobilize. But the conclusion must be that if Russia agreed, then no German mobilization would follow: there would be no reason for it. Hence, mobilization need not necessarily follow the proclamation of threatening danger of war.

The military literature upholds this view. The official history says that the proclamation "was purely a defensive measure, which threatened no one and in no way prejudiced the continuance of negotiations."[9] That it did not mean mobilization is also

[9] "Der Weltkrieg," I, p. 32. Montgelas quotes a document of the ministry of war of March 31, 1911 to the effect that the proclamation did not necessarily mean mobilization. *K. S. F.*, IX, 7, p. 766, August, 1931.

clear from the fact that on the 31st, after the proclamation, the idea of making August 1st the first day of mobilization was rejected because "the answer to the ultimatum to Russia and France must be awaited, according to the view of the diplomats."[10] Thus the military records agree with the diplomatic documents before and after July 30th, that mobilization would follow the proclamation only if the ultimatum were rejected.

Schmitt is in error, then, when he states that the proclamation meant mobilization. One link B in his chain (II, 199) is irreparably broken. Moreover, A, that Bethmann on the 30th decided to proclaim "threatening danger of war," is quite uncertain, unproved and even contrary to the documents.

On the 30th Bethmann told the Council of Ministers that he was waiting for the decision of Vienna on the German and Austrian proposals. "The decision on the German and English proposals would probably be taken in Vienna today" (II, 190) and the "decision might come in a short time, then another marching route would be entered upon" (II, 186). Bethmann did not state what the other "marching route" would be; he did not state that any decision on the point had been made. But Schmitt

[10] *I Untersuchungsausschuss*, Heft 2, pp. 14, 73-74. Schmitt cites an obviously erroneous statement in Balla's history of the 1st Jäger Battalion (II, 199, n. 1) to the effect that the state of "threatening danger of war" was announced to it on the 30th, whereas the facts in the book show that it should be the 31st. Schmitt then states that "threatening danger of war" was not "officially" proclaimed until July 31st (II, 199, n. 1), meaning—as he states in his reply to Moon—that "we do not know what orders may have been unofficially issued" ("N. Y. Times Book Review," Dec. 7, 1930, p. 51). In other words, if "we do not know" what Germany was doing, she must have been doing what Schmitt speculatively suspects—a line of reasoning that is found too often in "The Coming of the War."

concludes that a decision had been made and that it is to be found in the (mistranslated) telegram of the Bavarian military attaché in Berlin. "If Vienna declines today the German proposal of mediation, state of 'threatening danger of war' will follow even today and then mobilization" (II, 198). Now this telegram is mistranslated so that the "today" is overemphasized.[11] It refers only to the possibility that Vienna would decline the proposals. It states no source of information so that one is forced to rely on Wenninger's report of what subordinates in the war office told him; it may be merely the repetition of military gossip or the misinterpretation of words overheard. No one can be sure; but Schmitt accepts it without a word of hesitation. "This seems to indicate," he writes, "that the chancellor accepted the position of the generals sometime during the afternoon" (II, 190).

If the Bavarian military attaché's report be accepted, then Bethmann agreed to proclaim "threatening danger of war" and mobilization whenever the negative reply came in from Vienna; if on the 30th, then the proclamation and the mobilization were to follow on the 30th—"state of 'threatening danger of war' will follow even today." Schmitt implies that when he says that the Bavarian report "seems to indicate that the chancellor accepted the position of the generals sometime during the afternoon" (II, 198), for the "position of the generals" was that the

[11] Correct translation, "If Vienna declines the German mediation proposal of today" . . .

"proclamation" should be issued at once, on the 30th. Therefore, Bethmann decided, according to Schmitt's own excited account, to issue the proclamation on the 30th if Vienna declined on the 30th. But Schmitt *ipse,* in his most evasive reply to Moon,[12] says that his statement in the book was that Bethmann decided on the 30th to issue the proclamation on the 31st. Here he is simply in error again about his own book. His language (II, 198-199) can be interpreted in only one way, that Bethmann decided to issue the proclamation on the 30th. Later on (II, 263-265) Schmitt does write as if the decision was for the proclamation on the 31st; but his first statements leave no doubt, if language means anything (II, 198-199).

What Bethmann's other "marching route" would be in case Vienna accepted the Anglo-German proposal, is equally uncertain. But Schmitt supplies it again, again from an obscure statement of an unauthoritative Bavarian. At 11:15 A.M. on the 31st, the Bavarian minister telephoned to Munich that if "Austria should agree to the German and English proposal of mediation, it will be telegraphed to the Tsar, over the head of Sazonov, and at the same time an ultimatum will be presented demanding the stoppage of the mobilization" (II, 210).[13] Schmitt, of course, accepts every word of this without question and makes out that it was not a peaceful plan

[12] *N. Y. Times Book Review,* Dec. 7, 1930, p. 51.

[13] Schmitt fails to notice that the report speaks of an ultimatum but not of the proclamation.

because Russia would not have accepted it (II, 210-211).

There you have Schmitt's argument. Bethmann agreed to the generals' demands for the proclamation because it is not known what other "marching route" would have been taken after Vienna's decision and two obscure Bavarian reports confirm Schmitt's suspicions that Bethmann had decided to issue the proclamation or send an ultimatum as the other "marching route."

Schmitt has another argument, one of the best proofs of many that his mind is swayed by an *idée fixe*. This argument runs that Bethmann agreed to the generals' demand that "a decision on the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' must be made by noon the next day at the latest" (II, 198). Please note, a decision for or against. That the decision might go either way is attested by Moltke's statement that night that "the decision for peace or war would be made" "at noon" on the 31st (II, 212). But Schmitt simply assumes that the decision must be *for* the "proclamation" (II, 198, 199, 202, 263, 265), quite a preposterous assumption.

In a reply to Moon's criticism of his account of July 30th, Schmitt wrote this explanation of Moltke's words. Bethmann had agreed with the generals and it only remained to get the Kaiser's consent.[14] But the Kaiser's consent cannot have been necessary, if we are to follow Schmitt's account, for he has already dragged the reader through an enormous mass

[14] *N. Y. Times Book Review*, Dec. 7, 1930, p. 51.

of decayed "evidence" and sheer speculation (II, 192-198) to prove that the Kaiser agreed with the generals. What Schmitt is up against is the clear statement of Moltke that the decision would be made at noon on the 31st, and would be made for or against the proclamation. No amount of sophistry in the world can get around the fact that the decision was to be made on the 31st, on the basis of a decision yet to be made in Vienna and which would depend partly on a decision in St. Petersburg. The quite speculative assumption that Bethmann coöperated with the generals, behind the back of the Kaiser, the assumption that the generals would have waited a whole day before getting the consent of the Kaiser —all this is sheer absurdity.

This German "decision for war" (Kanner, p. 40; Schmitt, II, 199), "whatever the exact hour of agreement" (II, 198-199) and because "the circumstances in which this decision ("to force the situation") was reached are not altogether clear" (II, 201)—this decision is somewhat mysterious. The violent breach in logic by which a decision for or against the proclamation to be given on the 31st is converted into a decision for it on the 30th, the confused nature of the mistranslated Bavarian evidence, the tortuously ambiguous language of the author— "the position of the generals" (II, 198), "the decision for war" (II, 199), the decision "to force the situation" (II, 201), "No concessions would be made" (II, 204)—all this shows that Schmitt is

indulging in "sheer speculation" (II, 206) in order to make out a case against Germany.

How preposterous is the whole story of the "decision for war" can be seen from the statement that it was made "on the basis of the Russian partial mobilization" (II, 199). Now Bethmann in the Council of Ministers on the afternoon of the 30th stated that Russian and French preparations were verging on "threatening danger of war," the preliminary to general mobilization (quoted II, 190). The general staff report of 4 P.M. on July 30th (K. D., new ed., 431a) reported most alarming news of Russian preparations for general mobilization. Moltke became greatly alarmed, as his telegrams of the afternoon and night of July 30th show (II, 196-197), whereas he had been not greatly excited over Russian partial mobilization on the morning of the 30th (II, 191). Schmitt *ipse* calmly admits later that the news of the afternoon of July 30th in Berlin indicated Russian activity on the German border (II, 207) and that the "military measures which Russia was taking in Poland and the Baltic provinces" justified Moltke's demand "from the military point of view" (II, 211). How can he maintain elsewhere that, if there was a German decision before 12 P.M. on July 30th, that decision was based on partial mobilization? The news about Russian general mobilization became increasingly alarming from about noon on the 30th on to noon of July 31st. By midnight of July 30th Moltke had "two reliable reports of Russian general mobilization" (II, 212) but could not

get the chancellor's consent to German mobilization without "'some further confirmation'" (II, 262). Could the evidence be plainer? It was not partial but general mobilization by Russia that chiefly worried Bethmann and Moltke.

Moltke himself stated on August 2 that "it was not possible for me to speed up the work of the diplomats" (II, 271, note 2). So where does the "decision for war" on the "basis of Russian partial mobilization" come in? Answer, in the *bordereau,* with its Crowe-Nicolson-Grey-Kanner-Schmitt implications of militaristic control in Germany.

But Schmitt has other supporting "evidence" for point A (the decision for the proclamation) or rather, he warps the other evidence to suit his theory (II, 199-213). What is it? The German rejection of an insincere Russian formula of July 30th, on the ground that it was "'unacceptable' to Austria" (II, 199, 201). That it was "unacceptable" can be seen from the fact that it would have completely wrecked the Austrian ultimatum; Germany did not need to consult Austria to know that. That the formula was insincere is attested by Sazonov's statement in his memoirs that he took none of the diplomatic manœuvres seriously after July 28-29th,[15] a statement which does not appear in "The Coming of the War."

Further "proof" of the same fragility follows. Bethmann had William II urge Francis Joseph for an early answer to the "Halt in Belgrad" proposal

[15] "Fateful Years," p. 212. Grey did not approve of the formula and Poincaré thought it would be unacceptable to Austria.

(II, 202) and Bethmann sent out a strong telegram to Berchtold (II, 203)—both peaceful manœuvres. But Schmitt thinks they can be disregarded, partly for the following reason—if one may believe one's eyes: the German government rejected the (third) Austrian request to warn Russia against her military measures and gave as a reason that any further warnings would have to be an ultimatum. Since this shows the restrained attitude of the German government on the 30th at 9 P.M., Schmitt pounces on the statement of Jagow that "Austria must make" the representations in St. Petersburg alone to show that "no concessions" would be made (II, 204). What Schmitt fails to note is that this attitude was the German policy on July 28th and 29th as well as the 30th: Schmitt's sudden discovery of the third example (II, 204-205) and his turning it into a proof that Germany had decided "to force the situation" (II, 200) is incomprehensible to a neutral mind.

Further proof. At 11:20 P.M. Bethmann cancelled his urgent telegram to Berchtold (II, 203) because of news from the general staff of French and especially Russian preparations (II, 205-207). But he did not send this explanation to Tschirschky at Vienna, which gives Schmitt occasion to indulge in what he calls "sheer speculation" (II, 206). Then he states that "Bethmann stated frankly in his unsent telegram" that "he yielded to the representations of the general staff" (II, 206-207). What nonsense this is! Bethmann had been pressing for the "Halt in Belgrad" proposal from the late evening of the 28th

on. Now, on the night of the 30th he cancels his latest pressure telegram. This does not mean that he revoked all his previous instructions; it simply means that he cancelled one pressure telegram. In what sense that is a surrender to the "representations of the general staff" is beyond my comprehension; it is merely a lessening of efforts to avert war in the recognition that Franco-Russian military measures were rendering those efforts useless. But he did not give up altogether; he did not agree to mobilization or even "threatening danger of war"; he merely ceased momentarily[16] to exercise heavy pressure on Vienna. To describe that as "frankly" stating that "he yielded to the representations of the general staff" is to warp Bethmann's words out of their true significance and to shift the attention of the reader from Franco-Russian aggression to the Crowe-Nicolson-Grey-Kanner-Schmitt theory of militarist domination of German policy.

There follow, actually, some statements about Russian military measures preparatory to general mobilization (II, 207) of the *afternoon* of the 30th. Had he put those eight pages earlier he could never have maintained his theory of the German decision for war "on the basis of Russian partial mobilization" (II, 199). Then come some French measures (II, 208) and two more preposterous theories. One is the theory of Fischer that the general staff had forced Bethmann to cancel his telegram to Tschirschky because German mobilization could not

[16] At 2:45 A.M. on the 31st he began his efforts again, K. D., 464.

be ordered except as a result of Austrian general mobilization—"it is said."[17] Anything, no matter how ridiculous, just to keep off Russian general mobilization is Schmitt's rule. The other preposterous theory is that since Germany had telegraphed to Paris, "Departure of Germans advisable," therefore "the die had been cast for war" (II, 208). Here as elsewhere (II, 131), for Schmitt, "likely"—"certain."

Then comes the grand climax of the thrilling melodrama. On the night of the 30th—Schmitt doesn't give the hour—"the decision was taken in Berlin to present an ultimatum to Russia" (II, 209). Just think of the magic potency of that word "ultimatum"; like "war," "secret," "military," it is a magic word, provided it can be read into German actions. The proof consists of two unauthenticated statements of Berchtold *(sic)* telling of a German decision of rather uncertain time—since the time is doubtful they must have been made the night before (II, 209-210)—and a quite unauthorized telephonic conversation of Lerchenfeld with Munich (II, 210). They all speak of an ultimatum, and Lerchenfeld's statement came at 11:15 A.M., just in the nick of time for the Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau*—that is, just 25 minutes before the news of Russian general mobilization hit Berlin. There can be no doubt, however fragile the evidence, that Germany decided on an ultimatum, for Schmitt's theories re-

[17] Schmitt has already blundered in saying that Austrian general mobilization would create the *casus foederis* for Germany (II, 198); now it appears again (II, 208).

quired it (II, 265). All conflicting testimony and argument—and there is plenty—must be disregarded so that that German decision for an ultimatum gets born before the actual, final, official news of Russian general mobilization.

It does not seem to occur to Schmitt that the news of Russian preparations for general mobilization that reached Berlin from noon of the 30th on was sufficient to justify an ultimatum to Russia regardless of the Kanner-Schmitt *casus foederis* (II, 209), Liége (II, 209) or Schmitt's decision for war on "the basis of the Russian partial mobilization" (II, 199). In other words, if a decision for an ultimatum to Russia had been made in Berlin on the morning of July 31st, it would have been made because of Russian general mobilization. But no such decision was made. Schmitt carefully avoids mention of the conference of 9 A.M. on the morning of July 31st in Berlin at which Moltke tried to use his third independent report of Russian general mobilization to get the proclamation. But Bethmann resisted until the last minute—until Russian general mobilization was officially known and absolutely certain. There was no decision for an ultimatum and no decision for the proclamation, such as Schmitt imagines (II, 209).

Then comes some military information, Schmitt's confession that Russian measures on the German border justified Moltke's demands (II, 211), Moltke's statement that "the decision for war or peace would be made" on the 31st "at noon" (II, 212)—

enough to wreck the whole section of mistranslations, errors, guesses, suspicions and "sheer speculation" (II, 186-213).

Such is the "proof" that Bethmann had decided on the 30th to issue the proclamation of "threatening danger of war" at noon on July 31st. If Schmitt is really serious with his theory why doesn't he line up the news of Russian military measures in chronological order as it reached Berlin on the 30th? Why does he not list the German diplomatic moves on the 30th in their right order and relate them to the military news? Why does he not take the trouble to investigate the time when the Prussian Council of Ministers was held, since the original Kautsky edition gave no hour? No, he must put the Council where he wants it, before the final official news of Russian partial mobilization although the German government knew of the Russian measures on the night of July 29-30. He must run in a "decision" for the proclamation—evidence entirely lacking—and a "decision" for an ultimatum—evidence quite untrustworthy—before the final official news of Russian general mobilization just as though the Germans had no information on the subject beforehand.

If we now sum up the story of the "decision for war" on July 30th, we can say that Schmitt's argument is quite defective. A and B, that Bethmann decided on the 30th to issue the proclamation, and that the proclamation meant mobilization—both are quite false. Thus, D, the "decision for war," just disappears.

One misses here the recognition that Bethmann held back the military men better than Grey, Sazonov or Poincaré and by an exhibition of self-restraint unmatched in the countries supposedly free from militarist influence exposed Germany to military disadvantage in the interests of keeping European peace. Instead, here as in the case of pre-war diplomacy (I, 54-55), as in the case of July 5-6 (I, 309-316), as in the case of the rejection of Grey's Conference proposal (II, 40-48), as in the case of German restraint on July 26-30th (II, 66-67, 130-131, 147-148, 186-213), as in the case of the plans for invading Belgium (II, 59-60, 130, 149-151, 191, 209, 266), as in the case of the German dilemma over the declarations of war (II, 262-273)—in these cases as well as in the case of German restraint on July 30-31st (II, 186-213, 262-273) the German policy is treated shabbily because the provocation involved in the Entente plan of squeezing the Central Powers into compliance or defeat by the assembling of their overwhelming military forces is simply neglected. Russian partial mobilization, to Schmitt, must be more important than Russian general mobilization. And the German chancellor is not to be credited with moderation in the face of Entente armaments—no, he is said to be unwilling to "face the military consequences of his political blunders" (II, 211. Similarly at II, 131) and to desire not to prevent war but to let it come provided the blame could be put on Russia (II, 148, 155-156, 167-168, 171-172, 187, 189, 200, 206, 208, 211-213, etc.).

To such a strained interpretation of Bethmann's policy is Schmitt forced by his failure to see the effect of Entente armaments and Entente attempts to use them for a diplomatic and military victory in July, 1914.

The distortion is all "crystal-clear" at the end of the section on July 30th in Berlin (II, 212-213). Here Schmitt is stating that Moltke and Bethmann "recognized an alternative to immediate war." What was it? Why nothing less than that the Germans might have let the Entente mobilize during negotiations over the Austro-Serbian dispute! This was what Grey's mediation and conference proposals (July 24-30th) had planned to bring about. But could anyone who understands European diplomacy imagine that those Entente armaments would not force a diplomatic humiliation on the Central Powers that would wreck Germany's only reliable ally? Schmitt also assumes here that mobilized France and Russia would not seize the opportunity of crushing Germany before she could arm—which he may assume, if he wants to, but which he cannot expect the Germans to have assumed in July, 1914.

In conclusion, let us summarize the strange doctrines of this section (II, 186-213) and see what they are worth. Bethmann thought Russian partial mobilization made war inevitable (II, 186-187); the military men believed measures in Liége, not Russian measures, were dangerous to Germany (II, 190-191); the Emperor and Moltke thought that Russian partial mobilization should be answered

with the proclamation of "threatening danger of war" (II, 192-198); Bethmann yielded to the generals and decided for war on the basis of Russian partial mobilization sometime on the 30th (II, 198-199); sometime on the evening of the 30th Bethmann "decided to force the situation" (II, 202-207), impliedly on the basis of Russian partial mobilization; it was decided to send an ultimatum to Russia (II, 209-211) impliedly again on the basis of Russian partial mobilization. But then the whole argument blows up with a ridiculous pop, for the author admits that "threatening danger of war" was "the logical reply to the military measures which Russia was taking in Poland and the Baltic provinces" (II, 211), that is, Russian *general* mobilization; that Moltke had received two reliable reports of Russian *general* mobilization by midnight of the 30th (II, 211-212) and that Moltke said about midnight that the decision for "peace or war" would be made "at noon" on the 31st (II, 211-212). Thus the section ends in a complete fiasco. The decision for war was not to be made until noon of the 31st, Russian general mobilization was what alarmed Moltke and no decision was reached before the actual arrival of the news of Russian general mobilization.

Thus the "decision for war" on the 30th on the basis of Russian *partial* mobilization (II, 186-211) suddenly turns into *no* decision at all until the arrival of news of Russian *general* mobilization at noon on the 31st (II, 211-213, 263).

The flat contradiction between these two different

sets of doctrines within the section can be cleared away only by the elimination of the first set. That the doctrines there enunciated (II, 186-211) are false is shown by (1) gross mistranslations (II, 187, 189, 197, 198); (2) garbled documents (II, 187, 188, note 1, 190, 197); (3) unreliable sources (II, 192-196, 196-198, 198, 208, 209-210); (4) misinterpretation of good sources (II, 186, 188, 189, 190-191, 192, 197-198, 199, 200, 204, 205, 207); (5) misplacement of evidence (II, 186, 190, 211-212); (6) evasiveness of language (II, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 198, 199, 201, 202, 206, 207, 208); (7) substitution of various reasons for German worry on July 30th (II, 187, 188, 191, 192, 196-198, 199, 208, 209) instead of the real reason which he admits later was, "from the military point of view," Russian *general* mobilization (II, 211-212).

This crucial section of the book, therefore, turns out to be full of errors, misinterpretations and in flat contradiction to the documents quoted at the end. The "decision for war" on the 30th is a mare's nest. The material in Schmitt's own book thus destroys his central thesis.

CHAPTER VIII

Chronological Refutation

THE errors pointed out above[1] run through the whole book with devastating effect. From the very first page, to the last page, including the index, one finds beneath a thin veneer of impartiality nothing but a long series of blunders and distortions caused by the author's attempts to prove the Central Powers bad and the Entente Powers good.

I. Pre-War Diplomacy

The sham impartiality of Schmitt's account of pre-war diplomacy appears in the statements that in June, 1914 "at last" the "two great diplomatic groups stood face to face" (I, 53)[2] and that "there were no disputes pending between the Great Powers" (I, 175).

But underneath this apparently calm account it soon appears that one set of powers desired to overthrow the *status quo* by force—Germany and Austria.[3] Germany had pledged something to Austria

[1] In the previous chapters some of the characteristic errors apparent in "The Coming of the War" have been pointed out. Chapter VII provides a detailed analysis of the effects of those errors upon the crucial argument relating to July 30th in Berlin. It remains to point out how the errors affect his whole argument.

[2] The contrast between 1900, when the Alliances stood "side by side" (I, 11) and 1914, when they were "face to face" (I, 53) is dramatic but quite false.

[3] In one place (I, 76) he has Germany among the powers that desired to maintain the equilibrium; in another (I, 174) with Austria in a desire to upset it.

in Moltke's letter to Conrad in 1909 that encouraged Austria by promising her an un-Bismarckian support in an aggressive policy in the Balkans (I, 14-18). Then in 1913-1914 Germany, especially William II, and Austria were planning to use force on Serbia (I, 166-174).

As for the promises of Moltke to Conrad, let the reader consult the chapter entitled The *Bordereau,* above. There he will find that the legend of undue support for Austria-Hungary through a secret letter of Moltke has no connection with German policy in 1914. Schmitt's statement that the Moltke letter constituted "in effect" "a military convention" than which "nothing could be more specific" (I, 17-18) is belied by his own intangible interpretation of it. The whole story is marred by Schmitt's gross mistranslation of Moltke's letter and by the utter failure to connect it with German policy in July, 1914.

As for the aggressive intentions of Austria and Germany in 1913-1914 Schmitt's proof is nothing short of ridiculous. First he cites three versions of the Austrian memorandum, which was given to Berlin on July 5th by Hoyos, to show that it was "highly significant" (I, 165) that Berchtold eliminated a section dealing with Rumanian help in creating better relations between Austria and Serbia (I, 165-166). The first and second versions of May and June 24, 1914, contained the section: but "this was eliminated by Count Berchtold. The change indicates clearly that a policy of trying to promote friendly

relations with Serbia was definitely abandoned" (I, 166). But Schmitt here is badly in error; he states that the memorandum "was approved on 28 June" (I, 163) whereas in reality the June 28th version was the third version which cannot be found in the archives (Ö.-U. A., VIII, p. 261, note a). Hence no one can tell with absolute certainty whether or not Berchtold eliminated the disputed section from the third version of June 28th; but Schmitt, of course, must have Berchtold eliminating the section on June 28th *before* the assassination so as to show that Austrian policy was aggressive even before the assassination.[4]

Now the probabilities are all against the theory that the section was eliminated from the third version of June 28th before the assassination. For the fourth version of July 1 contained a section which declared that friendly relations with Serbia were impossible; it was written after the assassination and would naturally cause the cancellation of the section dealing with friendly relations with Serbia. But if it was written after the assassination, as it was, then the cancellation of the disputed section would also occur after the assassination. Schmitt's error in confusing the unknown third version of June 28th with the fourth version of July 1 wrecks his close-cut calculations about Berchtold's policy on June 28th. It is "highly significant" (1) that he should place so much reliance on such close-cut calculations; (2)

[4]The fourth version was approved on July 1-2, not on June 28 (Ö.U. A., VIII, p. 253).

that this is the only direct evidence he gives for the alleged aggressiveness of Austrian policy before the assassination;[5] (3) the evidence he cites for his theory proves just the opposite.

Further proof. Pallavacini seems to have stated to a Rumanian statesman in Bucharest after the assassination that Austria desired war on Serbia; even before the assassination the Rumanian statesman repeated it to Lichnowsky, who reported it to Berlin on July 23rd (I, 166-167). Pallavicini also stated to the Austro-Hungarian military attaché in Constantinople after the assassination that Francis Joseph was thinking of war as the only solution even before the assassination (I, 167). These fourth-hand rumors must be true; for Lichnowsky gives one and Conrad the other.

Next comes more fourth-hand "evidence." Francis Joseph told Conrad that at Konopischt Francis Ferdinand had asked William II whether "in the future also" Austria "could reckon unconditionally on Germany" (I, 169). William II, according to Francis Joseph, evaded the question; Schmitt doubts this. But what kind of a question was it? Germany had not supported Austria unconditionally in the past so that the phrase "in the future also" is meaningless. Another meaningless, fourth-hand story is

[5] In view of the repeated assertions about the firm determination of Berchtold to make war on Serbia (I, 166-173, 264-265, 272) it is astonishing to read that Berchtold was still vacillating even after the assassination (I, 275). In fact he describes Berchtold as for war on the 28th (I, 166) vacillating on the 29th (I, 265, n. 2), for war on July 1 (I, 265), and vacillating on July 5 (I, 275-276). In the same way he declares Francis Ferdinand desired war on Serbia (I, 134) and did not desire war on Serbia (I, 152).

then introduced. Conrad relates that Col. Metzger said that Francis Ferdinand had said that William II said at Konopischt that if war were forced upon Austria, and she did not "strike, the situation" would "get worse" (I, 169). Now isn't that a significant statement, to say that if a country gets into war and does not strike the situation will get worse? It is significant only as an indication of the kind of evidence used in "The Coming of the War."

Next follow some conversations Conrad says he had with William II in September and October 1913 that show that William II "began to play with the idea of using force" (I, 170-173). But as Schmitt deflates these stories himself by stating that William II was thinking of using force only "in case an understanding between these two states (Austria and Serbia) could not be reached" (I, 172), there is no need for comment here.[6]

Such is the evidence Schmitt produces to show that Austria and Germany were planning to use force on Serbia. Errors, fourth-hand gossip and meaningless statements found mostly in the unreliable memoirs of Conrad—these serve to convict the Central Powers.

Similar prejudiced and inaccurate judgments on the policies and statesmen of the Central Powers run through the whole account of pre-war diplo-

[6]Even Schmitt does not maintain that the German foreign office was cognizant of these "plans." But later (I, 174) he assumes that "Germany" was planning the same thing.

macy.[7] The Austro-German Alliance of 1879 is described as the "first step" in the formation of the alliances that led to the war; it was made "in time of peace when no great issues were pending" (I, 8-9). All the alliance treaties "were defensive in character" (I, 8) but the Triple Alliance was the first to be widened in its scope (I, 12) so as to allow room for Italian ambitions in the Balkans and Tripoli. "Thus the Central Powers were clearly contemplating changes in the existing territorial arrangements of Europe" (I, 13). The German promise of 1891 to support Italy in Tripoli is thus portrayed as the basis for the Italian seizure of Tripoli in 1911, which led to the Balkan Wars and then to the World War! (I, 13).

The errors in this treatment of the Triple Alliance are too numerous to mention. But what is to be said for a diplomatic history that emphasizes so strongly the Germanic countries' plans in case the *status quo* should be changed and neglects to point out that the prolongation of the Franco-Russian alliance in 1899 was based on the assumption that Austria-Hungary would fall to pieces? And what can be said for a diplomatic history that traces the Italian action in Tripoli in 1911 to a German concession to Italy in 1891 (I, 13) and omits all mention of the facts that (1) France gave a much more

[7]Germany is classed with Austria-Hungary and Russia as an oppressor of submerged racial minorities and the Alsacians are described as "kinsmen" of the French! (I, 4). The Rumanians of the Banat and Bukowina are added to those in Transylvania in the statement that "more than three millions" of Rumanians lived in Transylvania (I, 157).

inciting promise in 1901-2 (omitted at I, 13, 19, 23-24); (2) French action in Morocco in 1911 precipitated the Italian action? (omitted at I, 13, 19, 24, 91).[8] Apparently the idea underlying this account is that "territorial changes" were never contemplated except by the Central Powers and that the German promise of 1891 to Italy precipitated the events of 1911 that led indirectly to the World War.

In short, the Germans and the Austrians were to blame for everything that happened in Europe.

(1) They made the *first* alliance in 1879 (I, 9), as though The Three Emperors' League had never existed and as though a formal alliance were necessary to bring France into a war between Russia and Germany.

(2) They were the *first* to extend the scope of the alliances (I, 12-18) through agreements with Italy that later led to the World War and through the Conrad-Moltke letters.

(3) They were the *first* to contemplate changes in the territorial arrangements of Europe (I, 13), as though Russia never contemplated acquiring the Straits, as though France did not think of acquiring Alsace-Lorraine.

(4) They were the *only ones* to contemplate the use of force (I, 166-174), as though the British, French and Russians had not in-

[8] Russian encouragement to Italy in 1909 is given only incidentally in the midst of a discussion of Russian designs on the Straits (I, 85).

creased their armaments in an effort to obtain an overwhelming military superiority.[9]

(5) The Germans were the first to develop universal military service and thus "forced the other continental countries after 1871" to do the same (I, 54), as though universal military service had been fully applied in Germany before 1914 and as though the size and efficiency of armies were determined solely by formal universality of the military service.

As for the Entente Powers, they could not have been more lamb-like than Schmitt most awkwardly makes them out to be.

Take the case of Russia. Schmitt admits that Russia was planning a new Balkan League that would hold Austria in check while she took the Straits (II, 88, 98, 173-174); he admits that Russia was fanning the reckless Serbian desires for Austrian territory (I, 141-143); but nevertheless he is able to conclude that "there is no evidence that at this time Russia was pursuing any policy other than the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans" (I, 143). Very simple: the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and

[9]Later one reads (about July 5), "First in order of time, first in degree of authority among all his countrymen, the German Emperor thus sanctioned the course which Austria-Hungary desired to follow" (I, 296), just as though William II's decision were considered final in Berlin and Vienna. Similarly William II and Bethmann were the "*first* responsible statesmen to take decisions (July 5-6) which might have the most dire consequences" (I, 329) as though Russia had not deliberately egged on the Serbians and as though France had not supported Russia in this dangerous policy, especially in 1912-14. In the same way the German government is declared to have been the "first among the Great Powers to decide formally, on the afternoon of 31 July, that the issue must be settled by immediate war" (II, 272), as though Russian general mobilization had not been decided on before that in the full consciousness that it meant a European war.

Turkey cannot be considered a change in the *status quo* in the Balkans.

France was quite as passive as Russia. In the published correspondence of Izvolski,[10] according to Schmitt, "there is not a single reference to Alsace-Lorraine, not a single statement implying a desire for war, not a remark suggesting that the French Government was scheming to precipitate war" (I, 65). Such words imply that Schmitt has not read Izvolski's correspondence—else how could he miss Izvolski's telegram of November 4, 1912, in which he quotes Poincaré's attitude in the Balkan crisis as being this, "If Russia enters war, France will do the same" . . . "It is up to Russia to take the initiative in a matter in which she is the most interested party."[11] As for Alsace-Lorraine, could anyone read the telegrams of Izvolski of September 30, 1914,[12] and still be in doubt as to the fact that Delcassé, when ambassador in St. Petersburg, had talked to Russia of Alsace-Lorraine as the goal of French policy? Nor does Schmitt consider the words of the French ambassador in St. Petersburg in 1910, Georges Louis. In August of that year M. Louis noted that the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine was regarded as axiomatic and fundamental in the Franco-Russian alliance—the Lost Provinces and the Straits were "the supreme goal of the Alliance which one takes for granted." To go beyond Izvolski for one

[10] By talking only of the correspondence of Izvolski, Schmitt dodges the necessity of citing Delcassé's attitude in 1905.

[11] Stieve, "Der Diplomatische Schriftwechsel Iswolskis," II, p. 346.

[12] Stieve, "Iswolski in Weltkriege," pp. 118-119.

of many expressions of opinion, let the reader consult the words of Grey, the hero of "The Coming of the War," that show that he, Grey, refused to have anything to do with an agreement with Germany unless France and Russia were parties and that "the French could not be a party to anything which looked like confirming the loss of Alsace and Lorraine."[18] From these—dozens of others could be cited—one sees how far from accuracy Schmitt can roam.

Another sample of Schmitt's attempts to whitewash the Entente is found in his relegation to the footnotes of the Izvolski-Poincaré bribery of the French press (I, 22, note 1). The object of bribing the press was to bring the French public to the policy of supporting Russia in a war over the Balkans. But Jagow's attempts to bribe the press of various countries in the interests of localization of the Balkan conflict in July, 1914, seem to Schmitt "as shameless as the activity of M. Izvolski in Paris" (I, 399). In other words, in a book devoted to the origin of the European war, an attempt to prevent it by bribery of the press is said to be the equivalent of the attempt to bring it on by bribery. The reason is that the attempt to bring it on was a Franco-Russian manœuvre and hence must be defended.

In discussing the British, and their system of Ententes, Schmitt puts no limits to his adulation. The

[18] Br. Doc., V, No. 867, Sept. 1, 1909. This volume was published in 1928, two years before "The Coming of the War." An innocuous part of this document is quoted by Schmitt at I, 44, n. 1. To quote the relevant part would mean admitting that even Grey recognized and supported the French policy of acquiring Alsace-Lorraine.

"primary purpose" of the Ententes "was to liquidate existing disputes" (I, 28), though, of course, the Anglo-French Entente excluded Germany from Morocco and the Anglo-Russian Entente handicapped her activity in Persia (I, 27). The Entente was originally a "loose diplomatic agreement" (I, 27) but was strengthened on April 22 and May 17, 1905 (I, 32) because of *German* actions which took place afterwards! (I, 30-31; "actions" of May 2, 30; June 1, 11, 22, 26; July 24). "Real impulsion to the Triple Entente was first given by the Bosnian crisis" of 1908-1909 (I, 40); to "prove" this he cites statements of Nicolson, Izvolski and Grey that are not nearly so vigorous as the statements made at Reval (I, 39-40) *before* the crisis. His conclusion that "the policy of Prince von Bülow, instead of smashing the Triple Entente, as he boasted in 1913, gave it life and being" (I, 43) is wrecked by his admission of the Franco-German agreement over Morocco (I, 43-44) and the Russo-German agreement at Potsdam (II, 44). The strengthening of the Entente in the years 1912-1914 must also be attributed to German policy (I, 45-53); the German foreign office "had no definite policy" (I, 45) but its definite policies of "naval expansion, the development of an African Empire, colonial and financial penetration of the Near East" convinced the Entente "of the dangerous reality of German militarism" (I, 46).

This stupid German policy is to be contrasted with that of Great Britain.[14] When Britain was iso-

[14] Schmitt is in error in stating that Britain offered Germany an "out-and-out alliance" in 1901 (I, 28).

lated, she made "large sacrifices to secure the friendship of France and Russia" whereas Germany "was unwilling to renounce any of her desires" (I, 46). This statement does not prevent Schmitt from mentioning the German acceptance of a 10-16 ratio for the navies (I, 72), the surrender of the terminus of the Bagdad Railway to Britain (I, 73), and the surrender of Morocco to France (I, 60). What more Germany could have done to please the Entente, short of abdicating as a great Power, Schmitt does not explain.

It was a British statesman who was the only man with "a vision of new order" (I, 56)—of all people, Sir Edward Grey! He was a kind of premature Spirit of Locarno and Pact of Paris incarnate (I, 58). He desired an understanding with Germany (I, 51, 57) and proposed non-aggression pacts to Germany in 1912 and 1914 (I, 58; II, 260) which Schmitt does not realize originated with Bethmann. At times Schmitt does seem aware of the fact that Grey's policy was dictated by motives not unconnected with British interests (I, 51; II, 280, 360). But usually he depicts Grey as a noble, peace-loving soul who would scorn to support Franco-Russian aggression against Germany.[15]

To maintain this nonsense about Grey and the Entente Schmitt is forced to dodge some pretty difficult facts. He fails to quote Grey's interpretation of the Anglo-Russian Entente, to the effect that "Ten

[15] Schmitt's description of Grey leads one to think that Grey was not a diplomat at all.

years hence, a combination of Britain, Russia, and France may be able to dominate Near Eastern policy,"[16] as this would interfere with the judgment that the Ententes were meant merely to liquidate existing disputes (I, 27). If the British, at Reval in 1908, urge the Russians to build up armaments, Schmitt's comment is that "M. Izvolski, for his part, was equally cautious"! (I, 39). The more than ambiguous attitude of the British in 1908-1909 receives no proper comment (I, 40-43, 85, 122-129) in spite of the voluminous material on this subject now available. Again, in discussing the crisis of 1911, Schmitt gives Lloyd George's bellicose speech, for which Grey was equally responsible, only one line (I, 46). Nor does he see fit to evaluate Grey's opposition to the Haldane missions of 1906 and 1912, Grey's obstruction in the case of the Bagdad Railway or his negotiations for an Anglo-Russian naval convention in 1914.

Thus Grey's rôle in the Entente, of holding the Entente together until Russia was ready for the conflict, is completely obscured.

This lovely, peaceful, calm Entente, then, is to be contrasted with the aggessive, bustling and stupid Central Powers. How far from realities this contrast leads the author of "The Coming of the War" can best be seen in his evasion of the issue on pre-war armaments. Now this book was heralded as the first book to evaluate and connect the military with the diplomatic events in Europe. Nothing is more signifi-

[16] Br. Doc., IV, p. 617, Feb. 24, 1908. Published in 1929.

cant in pre-war diplomacy than the Franco-British support of huge Russian armaments. Yet Schmitt chooses to dismiss the subject with only one paragraph! (I, 54-55). Here one actually reads that the sequence of the army laws—once it is established that Germany was the first to put in universal military service[17]—the money spent and the size of the armaments make little difference. Hence the contribution of this book amounts to just nothing because of the fact that a real contribution would spoil his account of the peaceful, passive Entente.

Therefore, one may say without fear of exaggeration that Schmitt's account of pre-war diplomacy is prejudiced, misleading and inaccurate.

The purpose of the account is the same as the purpose of the rest of the book—to prove the Entente peaceful and the Germanic powers aggressive. In the chapters dealing with pre-war diplomacy Schmitt has "shown" that German diplomacy was bound by a secret military convention made by Moltke in 1909; the fact that the French and Russians had agreed to mobilize upon news of mobilization in Germany or Austria (I, 10) is kept separate from the fact that they considered mobilization meant war (II, 250-252) so that a similar but temporary Austro-German arrangement 17 years later can be said to be "more specific" (I, 17). In artificially parallel language he describes French and Ger-

[17] Schmitt declares that the German constitution "prescribed" a peacetime army of 1 per cent of the population and implies that the constitution was violated in 1913 when more than 1 per cent were called in (I, 54). His sham impartiality can be seen in his comparison of the German 1 per cent with the Russian 1 per cent! (I, 54, 437).

man relations to their allies (I, 17, 21) as though an Austrian attack on Russia's reckless protegé were the equivalent of a Russian attack on Austria![18] The neglect of Serbian and Russian aggressiveness involved here would be unobjectionable if "The Coming of the War" were not filled with sloppy British moralizing.

But Schmitt needs this sham parallel in order to lay the setting for an account of July, 1914, that will disregard the fundamental nature of the conflict between Austria and Russia. In the same way he needs much talk of Grey's favorite idea of holding a conference in case of troubles in Europe (I, 57-58) in utter disregard of two fundamental facts: (1) that the conference of 1912-1913 over Balkan matters made the situation more strained than before; (2) that in a conference the Entente could dominate if it chose. To avoid these facts Schmitt omits all reference to the "encirclement" of Germany at Algeciras in 1906.

To these two great illusions—that the Central Powers were uniquely aggressive and the Entente invariably conciliatory—Schmitt adds two more great illusions—as to the actual working of the political institutions in the several states and the idea that pre-war armaments played little part in pre-war diplomacy. These four illusions form the basis of his anti-German account of pre-war diplomacy and pro-

[18] The same dodge appears in his statement that Germany would fight in case an "*Austro-Russian* war arose out of an Austrian attack on Serbia" (I, 21. Italics mine).

vide the basis for his long repetition of Entente propaganda about the events of July, 1914.

II. Serajevo

This subject causes the author a great deal of embarrassment. He admits that the Austrian "*dossier* did prove . . . that an agitation was tolerated in Serbia which was directed against the integrity of the Dual Monarchy" (I, 177). But he denies that the Serbian Government had any more than a general knowledge of "a plot" (I, 235-236) and he thinks the Serbian efforts, however feeble, to stop the plotters and warn the Austrian Government, should sensibly diminish the responsibility of the Serbian Government (I, 240-248).

But he avoids expressing any opinion as to whether the facts known in 1914 or even the facts known in 1930 justify the Austrian action. He confines himself to saying that the "general opinion was that Austria-Hungary had not proved the necessity of going to war against Serbia" (I, 177) and that it was of no importance whether she did prove it or not because "the Austro-Hungarian action was looked upon not in the light of a punitive expedition, but as a step affecting the independence of Serbia and involving the European balance of power" (I, 176). He says that it was so looked upon by "the Powers," but he means "by the Entente Powers." Henceforth, in the two volumes, the author proceeds

to do what the Entente Powers tried to do—to forget altogether the fact of the assassination.[19]

III. "Hapsburg's Hour" and "Hohenzollern's Bond"

These dramatic titles, whatever they may mean,[20] head the chapters dealing with the events of the first week of July, 1914. The thesis of the book is that Berchtold decided to make war on Serbia, got the consent of Francis Joseph and then outmanœuvred Tisza, who did not want war. Austria could do nothing without the consent of Germany; Germany urged her to act quickly.

Berchtold proposed to Berlin not only Tisza's long-run policy of building up a Balkan League through the addition of Bulgaria to the Triple Alliance but also his own policy of a "surprise attack," without mobilization, on Serbia. Germany was informed of Tisza's policy through the memorandum and of Berchtold's through the letter of Francis Joseph to William II and the oral communications of Hoyos. On account of the opposition of Tisza to a war policy, the explanations of Berchtold's policy had to be given orally. William II gave his sanction to Berchtold's plans and then induced Bethmann to decide the same way. Berchtold used this advice and

[19] See especially Vol. I, Chap. VI, "The Decisions of Austria-Hungary." See also the twist given the argument by the omission of the assassination in discussing "The Calculations of Berlin" (I, 328).

[20] The author intends the titles to convey the impression that Austro-German policy was dynastic in character. Cf. his mistranslation of *Monarchie-feindlichen* as "anti-dynastic." Vol. I, p. 318, and of *Erz-feind* as "hereditary enemy" (I, 348). Cf. also his frequent use of the word "master" to describe the rulers of the Central Powers in their relation to the political officials (II, 83, 187).

consent to overcome Tisza's resistance to a war policy. The plan of drawing Bulgaria into the Triple Alliance was then quietly dropped in favor of the plan of an attack on Serbia. Both governments realized that an attack on Serbia might mean Russian intervention, and a European war. Both faced the risk without hesitation. Thus Professor Schmitt.

The blunders in this interpretation of Austrian and German policy are too numerous for recapitulation. Let us examine some of them.

In the first place, take the theory that Berchtold sent Hoyos to Berlin to explain orally his policy of a "surprise attack" and a complete partition of Serbia in order to overwhelm Tisza with German support (I, 279). The sad fact is Hoyos' statements were made only to Zimmermann. The Austrian disavowal of Hoyos (I, 343; K. D., 18) stated expressly that Hoyos had made his statements to Zimmermann.[21] The "surprise attack" theory was not mentioned to Bethmann or William II; Schmitt's only evidence is to be found in certain statements of William II about "marching into Serbia" (I, 294-303). But, as the letter of Francis Joseph implied that "warlike action" would be the Austrian pro-

[21] Schmitt's handling of the Austrian disavowal of Hoyos contains the following characteristic errors: (1) He explains (I, 279) that Hoyos was disavowed on only one of these points whereas the disavowal itself (I, 343) speaks of "*everything* that Count Hoyos said in this conversation with the Undersecretary" (Italics mine). (2) He states that the disavowal covered only "what Hoyos had said to Zimmermann, and not what Szögyény had said to the Emperor William" (I, 343, n. 2); but he presents no adequate proof that Szögyény said anything of the kind to William. (3) He mistranslates and garbles the document. The Austrians wanted it "emphasized" and Schmitt has "understood"; the Austrians say that Hoyos' statements were "only his purely personal opinion" and Schmitt omits "purely." In this way, the Austrian disavowal is markedly weakened.

gram, as Schmitt admits (I, 293), there is no need for a Berchtold-Hoyos-Szögyény conspiracy to explain the use of "marching into Serbia" by William II.[22] That the partition of Serbia was mentioned to anyone except Zimmermann there is absolutely no evidence.[23] That fact, however, does not prevent Schmitt from declaring that the "German Government" knew it (I, 307). And what becomes of the Berchtold-Hoyos-Szögyény conspiracy theory (I, 275, 279, 291-302, 307, 343) when one reads in Schmitt's own account the confession that Hoyos "spoke of his own initiative and without authorization"? (I, 343, note 2).[24]

What is one to think of Schmitt's conclusion that "the German Emperor and the German Government agreed to the proposals of Count Berchtold—all of

[22] One of Schmitt's pieces of evidence is an unreliable account of a statement made by Krupp to Mühlon on July 17th as to what William II had told him on July 6th about the "language of the Austrians" on July 5th (I, 302-303). The main proof that the "surprise attack" plan was explained to William II is *one word* in a letter by Falkenhayn to Moltke on July 5th (I, 295). Falkenhayn wrote that William II had explained that he "thought he could deduce from the language of the Austrian ambassador" that Austria intended to smash the Serbian plots "and if necessary . . . to *begin* by marching into Serbia." But this "to begin" is a very free translation of *zunächst* and Schmitt makes no comment on *erforderlichenfalls*, "if necessary" or on he "thought he could deduce" or on any other qualifying phrases in the other references to "marching into Serbia." One word "begin" from the letter of a military man is held enough to prove that the "surprise attack" was mentioned to William II though the rest of Falkenhayn's letter shows that he misunderstood several things and that he considered no crisis would arise for weeks. As for Bethmann, even Schmitt makes no attempt to prove that he knew of the "surprise attack" but by mistranslating *eventuellen* into "eventual" he is able to conclude that Bethmann's statement (of dubious authenticity) to Szögyény "could only mean an attack on Serbia" (I, 306).

[23] Schmitt's only attempt at "proving" that the partition was mentioned to William II is the feeble note (I, 378, n.), "one wonders if Szögyény had hinted something to William about the plans for the partition of Serbia." Apparently he has not noticed that the disavowal telegram was sent to William II without the remarks about Hoyos (K. D., 18, n. 2).

[24] Schmitt refers to a statement of Jagow about Hoyos' conversation with Zimmermann; Jagow implies that the Austrian disavowal related only to the "partition" plan, but Schmitt's language implies at the beginning and end of his footnotes that Jagow was referring to everything that Hoyos said.

them, written and verbal" (I, 307) when one realizes (1) that no adequate evidence is produced to show that Hoyos' statements of Berchtold's plans were conveyed to either Bethmann or William II; (2) that Schmitt himself admits that Hoyos was speaking "without authorization"; (3) that the Bulgarian alliance plan, meant to hoodwink Tisza, was taken seriously in Berlin and therefore Berchtold's scheme had not been mentioned in Berlin?[25]

Perhaps Schmitt's points about the "surprise attack," the "partition" and the Bulgarian Alliance may be considered not his chief argument. But the main point he is confusedly trying to make is that Berlin understood Berchtold's warlike plans perfectly and agreed to them. If Bethmann and William II knew of the "surprise attack," the "partition" and the Bulgarian Alliance plans and approved of them, then the only solution considered in Berlin was that of military action against Serbia (I, 307). But if, as has been shown above, William II and Bethmann were not informed of Berchtold's plans, then other solutions than the military one were thought of and the repeated German declarations that Austria was to decide herself what she would do (K. D., 11, 15, 33, etc.) suffice to explain the German policy. That

[25] Schmitt says that Berchtold used the plan of a Bulgarian Alliance to hoodwink Tisza (I, 279) and implies that the German government was informed of this by Hoyos (I, 308). But if Hoyos spoke "without authorization" (I, 343, n. 2) how could Schmitt also maintain that Berchtold was using Hoyos to out-manœuvre Tisza? The documents contain plenty of evidence that the German government did not consider the Bulgarian plan discarded (K. D., 22, 26, 33). See also Szögyény's telegram of July 29th (Ö.-U. A., VIII, No. 10942). Schmitt implies also that Tisza, like Schmitt, did not realize that the Bulgarian Alliance plan was slower than the action against Serbia.

war against Serbia was a possibility, the Germans realized; but that it was definitely settled in Berlin that this was the only method (I, 307, and note 1) is an inaccurate conclusion.

Berlin did urge "immediate action" (I, 307). But that that action was understood to be "warlike action" alone is not justified by the statements in the documents or by logic.[26] Schmitt's mistranslation of Bethmann's—if it was Bethmann's—statement about "possible action" against Serbia from "possible" to "eventual" (I, 306) shows how he has misled himself into reading definiteness into the intentions of the German Government. Another method of approach is found early in the story (I, 263) where Schmitt has two Austrian officials who urged immediate war advocating "immediate action, that is, war"; presumably, then, he means

[26] Some of the methods by which Schmitt reaches his results are not uninteresting. (1) He invents a great distinction between the memorandum, the letter of Francis Joseph and the talk of Hoyos. But the statements of Hoyos were not made to William II and Bethmann and were disavowed by Vienna on July 7. Schmitt speculates that Berchtold's plan of military action was told to William II by Szögyény and not disavowed (I, 343, n. 2) but he had already admitted that "warlike action" was implied in Francis Joseph's letter (I, 293) so that he has not proved much difference between the letter and Hoyos' statements so far as William II is concerned. The memorandum and the letter were very similar in tone and contents; the artificial distinction which Schmitt makes between the two is meant solely to exaggerate the rôle of William II (I, 276-278). (2) Mistranslations, recorded for I, pp. 273, 293, 305 n., 306, 318, 327; (3) garbled documents, (I, 299, 305, 306, 327); (4) Misquoting his own book, I, 287, 290; (5) neglect of the qualifications that went with William II's statements, I, 293-303; (6) Unreliable sources, I, 262 (Scott), 267 (Naumann), 269 n. 2 (Vienna correspondent), 275 (Hoyos), 284-285 (Scott), 287 (Lichnowsky), 292 (Lichnowsky), 293-294 (Szögyény), 297 (Zwehl), 303 (Mühlon), 304-307 (Szögyény), 317-318 (Szögyény), 319-320 (Schoen), 324 (Lichnowsky), 324-325 (the British minister in Sofia); (7) Reading Berchtold's strained interpretation of German policy derived from Szögyény's exaggerated accounts as though it were the German policy itself (I, 291-292, 304, 305 n., 307, 329); (8) Quoting first the Austrian general statement that Hoyos' remarks about the "surprise attack" and "partition" were made "in Berlin" (I, 291-292) and reserving till much later the more definite and earlier Austrian statement (I, 343) that the remarks were made only to Zimmermann.

that Berlin in urging "immediate action" urged war (I, 307).

It is also clear that Schmitt overemphasizes the rôle of William II in making the German decision. He has prepared the way for this overemphasis by stating that William II "had been pondering for three months the idea" of an Austrian war on Serbia (I, 172).[27] The ambiguous and contradictory nature of William's statements, however, does not prevent Schmitt from introducing them as reasons why Francis Joseph sent a personal letter to William II on July 5th, just as though the letter was not dictated by Berchtold and as though Bethmann was not intended to see it (I, 278).[28] To show further that the letter of Francis Joseph was sent to William II in the knowledge that William II was urging the use of force, certain statements of William II in May, 1914 (quoted at I, 172-173) that the "utmost friendly relations possible" between Austria and Serbia would be very difficult are misinterpreted (I, 290), as follows: "in May, 1914, (William II) had said that he considered an understanding out of the question."[29] Doubtless the same purpose underlies the nonsense about Konopischt (I, 169).[30]

[27] He qualifies it with this—"in case an understanding between those two states could not be reached" (I, 172). He has already admitted that as late as March, 1914, the German government considered an Austro-Serbian understanding the best policy (I, 136, n. 1).

[28] The statements are used again: I, 290.

[29] He calmly refers to the original statement (I, 290, n. 2, referring to I, 171-172) as though no discrepancy existed. His reference should be to I, 172-173 for the May statement.

[30] He refers later to the Konopischt legend specifically in this connection only once (I, 351). The overemphasis of William II's rôle is part of a strained attempt to prove that Austria and Germany were planning war on Serbia *before* the assassination (I, 166-174, 278, 290).

The truth is that the Austrians had to make a special effort to overcome William II's anti-Bulgarian and pro-Serbian sentiments.[31] This, not any fancied encouragement of the Austrians to war (I, 169, 171-173, 278, 290), was the reason for the special appeal to the German ruler.[32]

Finally, we come to Schmitt's conclusion that Germany "promised unconditional support" to Austria on July 5-6 (I, 307). This is an astounding conclusion if one remembers that both Bethmann and William II limited the Bulgarian Alliance idea by the reservation that it must be done in such a way as not to offend Rumania (I, 294, 305) and that both Bethmann and William II urged Austria to act quickly (I, 294, 306). Later Germany gave Austria advice about compensation for Italy, about the presentation of documentary proof of Serbian guilt, about declarations of disinterestedness in St. Petersburg and about stopping in Belgrade—all of them impossible if German support had been "unconditional." Indeed, Bethmann refused definitely to give "unconditional support," for he deleted from the telegram to Tschirschky stating his policy the phrase "in all circumstances" (I, 305, note). Schmitt discounts the importance of this deletion; and resorts

[31] Schmitt admits the pro-Serbian sentiments of William II (I, 136, n. 1, 266) but thinks the qualified statement of Oct.-Nov., 1913 (I, 170-172) and the warped statement of May, 1914 (I, 172-3, 290) more important.

[32] Another distortion of William II's rôle is to be found in Schmitt's omission of an important statement from Bethmann's memoirs about his interview with the Kaiser on July 5th (I, 299). Bethmann wrote, *"Nachdem ich über ihren Inhalt referiert hatte"*; Schmitt omits this and makes the reader think, until later, that the Kaiser spoke first. Cf. also his mistranslation of *definitiv* into "definite" (I, 293).

to Szögyény's telegraphic account of an oral conversation with Bethmann as the official statement of German policy rather than Bethmann's careful telegram to his own ambassador (I, 304-306).[83] The mere fact that Berchtold interpreted the German promise of support to be "unconditional" should not lead an historian so far astray as to neglect numerous clear documents and as well as later German actions.[84]

To recapitulate, one may say that Schmitt's account of Austro-German policy, June 28 to July 6, is as faulty as it could well be. The Berchtold-Hoyos-Szögyény conspiracy[85] that Schmitt reads into the documents lacks reality because two of the three main elements (partition, Bulgaria) obviously were not mentioned to Bethmann and William II, as

[83] There is much dispute as to whether Bethmann's telegram (K. D., 15) or Szögyény's telegram constitutes the official reply of the German government. The fact is that paragraphs three and four of Szögyény's telegram (A. R. B., I, 7) coincide in contents with Bethmann's telegram to Tschirschky, presumably because Bethmann dictated a statement. But the rest of the Szögyény telegram is much more unrestrained; to use this as source material and to avoid Bethmann's uncomfortable deletion of "in all circumstances" from his telegram, Schmitt decides for Szögyény's telegram in its entirety (I, 306) and concludes that German support was "unconditional" (I, 307). But the fact that Tschirschky telegraphed that Szögyény's telegram coincided in "contents" (Schmitt, I, 305, n., has "tenor") with his own instructions shows merely that Tschirschky, unlike Schmitt, understood the difference between official and personal statements (K. D., 18). Indeed, the part of Szögyény's telegram beginning with "in the further course of conversation" reads like a different document. The language is more reckless; the tone is foreign to Bethmann's ideas; and at least one part of it was talk of Hoyos to Zimmermann—in regard to Italy not being informed, as is shown by Berchtold's argument that this point had been discussed in Berlin "between Undersecretary Zimmermann and Count Hoyos" (A. R. B., I, 35, p. 102, July 20). In order to maintain his point that Berlin had agreed not to inform Italy, Schmitt does not quote this definite statement but resorts to the indefinite statement of Berchtold to Stolberg that "they *(man)* had admitted in Berlin" that this was the correct policy (I, 407).

[84] Later on in the book (I, 407) one finds even this statement: "The Austro-Hungarian statesmen were deaf to argument, for they knew that they had the Germans at their mercy."

[85] The Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau* is introduced only incidentally at this critical point in the narrative (I, 305, n.).

is shown by plain documents. The third element, the "surprise attack," is unnecessary, unprovable and extremely unlikely. The mistranslations, garbling of documents, use of unreliable sources, misquotations of his own book and other sins against historical methodology show that Schmitt is trying to fix up a case against Germany.

Whatever the purpose of these elaborate discussions of the "surprise attack," the official policy and the Kaiser's influence, the result is to divert the author's—and the reader's—attention from the main point. That is, that the German government expected that Austria would act quickly and that if she acted quickly, while the world still sympathized with her, then no European war would result.

One last point in regard to the period July 5-7. The author would have us believe that Germany and Austria-Hungary foresaw the danger of an international war and lightly took the great gamble. He says that "the promptness and completeness with which the Austro-Hungarian proposals were accepted can be explained only if the German Government was *not greatly concerned* whether war . . . came or not" provided Great Britain remained neutral (I, 329. Italics mine).[86] And "the Austro-Hungarian statesmen and generals were *not greatly concerned* about what Russia might do" (I, 372. Italics mine). These preposterous statements reveal

[86] The interpretation that William II *foresaw "European* complications" (I, 293) is based on a mistranslation of the German phrase *im Auge behalten* (A. R. B., I, 6) which means "keep in mind the possibility of *European* complications." Schmitt's mistranslation warps the "possible" into the "certain"—here as so often.

the author's flippancy of judgment. They neglect altogether the idea that quick action was less likely to arouse Russia and the Entente, while Europe still remembered the assassination. They neglect the fact that both Austria and Germany knew that Russia's military program would not be completed until 1916 or 1917. And they neglect the fact that both Austria and Germany knew enough of the contemporary currents of opinion in Russia to be able to make a decision without special reference to their ambassadors to Russia.[37] Presumably, Professor Schmitt thinks the Central Powers should have let Serbia's "big brother" decide how to punish her.

IV. "The Decisions of Austria-Hungary" (July 7-19)

The errors and distortions of judgment in this section betray Schmitt's characteristic disregard of the plainest facts. Let us examine four of the numerous blunders.

"In the published documents," writes Schmitt, "there are no communications from the German Government to the ambassador (in Vienna) between 6 and 11 July; which is extraordinary, considering

[37] In this connection Schmitt makes much of the fact that neither the German nor the Austro-Hungarian government consulted its ambassador at St. Petersburg to find out what the attitude of the Russian government might be. Like Scott, in "Five Weeks," he seems unaware of the fact that the governments of Europe, especially that of Russia, acted independently of newspaper opinions. Nor does he realize that it was not the custom to consult political enemies in cases of serious political actions. France and Britain did not consult Germany in 1904 before making their Entente; in 1912 Russia consulted none of the Great Powers, not even her own allies, when she started the Balkan League, or rather laid mines that later exploded in a European war. The author either fails to understand the nature of a *fait accompli* in diplomatic practice or, as seems more likely, he wishes to disregard the Austro-German idea that a *fait accompli* would be a good method of avoiding a European war.

the gravity of the matter" (I, 355, note 3). Presumably he means that the Germans are deliberately concealing the wicked policies which he has so acutely penetrated. Yet the plain fact is that all the telegrams between the German government and its representative in Vienna between July 2 and August 5th that were not given in the original edition of the Kautsky Documents were analyzed in the new edition of that collection, published in 1927 (K. D., IV, pp. 181-185). Can they not be described as "published documents"? Can an historian who reads so many wicked intentions into German policy afford to neglect the newer editions of sources for that policy, especially when the new edition is published three years before and the fact that new material is to be found in them has also been published?

Another point. The influence of the wild ravings of the Serbian press upon Austrian determination to take radical action against Serbia cannot be doubted. Schmitt's procedure, as in the case of military actions and every other fact that would tend to justify Austrian harshness, is to put the Serbian press comments of early July *after* the "final decisions" of Austria.[38] Very few Serbian press comments are

[38] "Final Decisions, I, 360-368; comments of Serbian press, I, 368. Characteristically, less than a line about the Serbian press is given in the section devoted to "explaining" the conversion of "Count Tisza" (I, 352-357), though Tisza expressly referred to the Serbian press as one of the main causes of his "conversion" (I, 354). Scott, J. F., "Five Weeks," 1927, from whom Schmitt derives his method and material, gives little space to the Serbian press comments and places them *after* the Austro-Hungarian (pp. 20-42, Austro-Hungarian; pp. 52-53, Serbian). Schmitt condenses Scott's account a little, but, like Scott, does not give the dates of the Serbian press comments, though the dates of each utterance are available in the A. R. B., I, pp. 104-106, published in 1919. Schmitt (I, 368), like Scott (p. 55) gives Tisza's significant utterance of July 14th "the tone of the Serbian press and of the Serbian diplomats was so presumptuous as simply not to be borne" long after the Austrian decisions and Tisza's conversion. Schmitt (I, 369), like Scott (pp. 55-57), immediately places the blame for the Serbian excesses on the Austrian policy and the Austrian press.

quoted and their rôle in the decisions of Tisza and of the other Austrian officials is almost eliminated by misplacement.

Misplacement of evidence distorts the whole account of Tisza's "conversion." For the famous Wiesner telegrams of July 13th which reached Vienna at 5 and 5:40 P.M. are placed six pages beyond where they belong.[39] Taken altogether, the removal of the Serbian press comments and the Wiesner telegrams from their proper place as well as the repetition of the J. B. Scott committee's emphasis on the least important part of Wiesner telegrams—these methods show Schmitt's characteristic unwillingness to place the plainest evidence in its proper order if he would thereby spoil his anti-Austrian moralizing.[40]

German policy, too, must receive some censure. Hence, Jagow's "frequent denials of any knowledge of the ultimatum before it was formally presented to the German Government" illustrate "Herr von Jagow's unreliability as a witness in the whole matter" (I, 383). But the fact is that the Germans knew they would be suspected of instigating the Austrian action[41] and deliberately attempted to counteract that suspicion in the hope that the Entente would be less vigorous if it believed this was an Austrian instead of a German manœuvre. But for Schmitt this

[39] Belong at I, 356, quoted at I, 362. There is no absolute proof that the Wiesner telegrams converted Tisza; but they were strong evidence against Serbia (Ö.-U. A., VIII, 10252, 10253).

[40] It is time that writers on Austrian policy cease picturing Tisza as a wise, moderate statesman. Part of the technique of Entente propaganda is to praise men as hard as Tisza and as soft as Lichnowsky merely because they opposed the official Austro-German policies in July, 1914.

[41] A suspicion which Schmitt shares and which leads him badly astray at numerous places.

diplomatic lying on the part of Jagow leads to all kinds of eccentric conclusions—"from the very beginning of the crisis the German Government was handicapped by the suspicion it gratuitously created that it was not acting in a straightforward and dependable manner" (I, 384), as though diplomats were accustomed to act, and as though the Entente diplomats in July, 1914, did act, "in a straightforward and dependable manner." Suspicion of every German move was the watchword of the British foreign office from 1904 on and certainly did not originate in 1914.[42] No one can show that von Jagow lied more frequently or more flagrantly during the 1914 crisis than Schmitt's own hero, Grey of Locarno.

V. "The Duping of Europe"

After the "decisions" of Berlin and Vienna, the Central Powers set out to perfect their plans in secret (I, 386). This customary diplomatic practise draws from the author all sorts of disapproving adjectives, such as "insincere," "misleading," "deceitful," as though he wishes to document his ignorance of diplomatic practise. It is worthy of note, however, that similar acts by Entente Powers receive no censure from Schmitt.

"The duping of Europe," he concludes, "seems to have been eminently successful" (I, 389). This, in spite of his knowledge of Lichnowsky's revelatory

[42] One great argument Schmitt derives from Jagow's "unreliability" is that Jagow's testimony here and elsewhere in the crisis can be simply disregarded, a very convenient way of disposing of facts contrary to his theories (see especially II, 74).

soundings in London (I, 419), and of Italy's information and transmission of that information to Russia on July 16 (I, 443). One would like to know how the author would explain Poincaré's language to Szapary in St. Petersburg (I, 451-452), if the French Government had been successfully "duped." Above all how could he explain the Franco-Russian agreement to present a common front in opposition to any serious Austrian action, diplomatic or otherwise, against Serbia? (I, 450). This agreement, it is necessary to note here, was made *before* the Austrian ultimatum was known and the two governments did not thereafter "modify" their "position" (I, 457). One is tempted to remark that peace might have been preserved if the "duping" really had been "eminently successful."

VI. The Triple Entente, June 28-July 23

The principal point about Entente decisions in this period is the determination not to let Austria take effective measures to remove the Serbian menace. Schmitt admits that "each government, with the exception of the British (!) had decided before 23 July just what it would do and, as events were to prove, did not modify its position" during "the great drama of the Thirteen Days, 23 July-4 August, 1914" (I, 457). This statement is quite inaccurate in regard to British and German policies and its sham impartiality is meant to camouflage the difference between an Austro-Serbian and a European war. Moreover, Schmitt logically should not talk in

such calm terms of aggressive Entente decisions after all his wailings about wicked Austro-German plans for war, wicked Austro-German "duping of Europe" (read "Entente") and the wicked Austro-German "gambler's plunge."

How far off is his judgment of British policy can be seen in his misunderstanding of Grey's manœuvres with Lichnowsky July 6-9th (I, 416-421). Grey found out all he could of the Austro-German plans, warned Russia and told Lichnowsky that he was trying to get Russia to understand the Austrian point of view and "to assume a conciliatory attitude toward Austria" (I, 421). Schmitt does not bother to investigate what Grey actually told Russia; he merely asserts that Grey's "action was certainly remarkable" (I, 421). In his account of July 6-9th, when Grey suggested that the Austrian demands of Serbia must be moderate, and of the 20th, when Grey suggested Austro-Russian "conversations" Schmitt loses sight altogether of the main point—that Grey was trying to check Austria in spite of his knowledge of the desperate condition of affairs in the Dual Monarchy. Here as elsewhere Schmitt neglects the fact that Grey was playing the Russian game from July 6th on; instead, he writes, that the "suggestion (July 20th) does honor to Grey's desire for peace" and "obviously Sir Edward Grey was trying to approach the problem without prejudice and as a good European" (I, 427).[43]

[43] Of course Grey "was not prejudiced in favor of Serbia. In his memoirs (1925) he writes: . . ." (I, 425).

If the reader wishes to know the source of many of Schmitt's suspicions and moralizings in regard to German policy, let him consult the statement (I, 429) that Crowe's "analysis of the situation" could not be "more accurate."[44]

As for Russian policy from June 28th to July 23rd, Russian hints to Austria and Germany that it would not tolerate an attack on Serbia were "clear-cut and concordant" (I, 442); "whatever may be thought of Russian policy, it is not open to the reproach of having concealed its sentiments and its intentions" (I, 446);—just as though the mere Russian statement of policy were enough to justify her actions. Here, as later, he accepts the Russian argument that an Austrian attack on Serbia would endanger Russian plans for acquiring the Straits (I, 440; II, 255). In brief, Entente plans, unlike Austro-German plans, are clear, open and a matter of course.

French and Russian policy, in the July crisis, was decided at the time of Poincaré's visit to St. Petersburg (I, 440, 447, 457). Poincaré rejected flatly Grey's proposal of Austro-Russian conversations (I, 451), as he "seems to have feared that such a conversation might prejudice mediation by the Concert

[44] Schmitt explains that Great Britain had to be careful not to offend Russia, on account of Mesopotamia and Persia (I, 432), which would lead the reader to conclude that Grey was surrendering his independence to Russia. Instead of this one reads that neither Berlin nor Vienna could be persuaded to believe Grey would support the Russian case (I, 433). Later, he calmly removes the Persian matter as a cause of anxiety in London and declares that this time Russia's conciliatory attitude "was to have no little effect on the British attitude" (I, 449). In other words, if Russia is irritated over Persia, Britain must support Russia in the Serbian question; if Russia is conciliatory, Britain must do the same.

of Europe." Schmitt knows this because Poincaré told him so (I, 451, note 4).

It is necessary to remember that all of Schmitt's nonsense about the openness and frankness (I, 457) of the noble French and pacific Russians is based on the idea that diplomats—or should one say, Entente diplomats?—always mean what they say. The Austrians and Germans thought that the Franco-Russian announcements were not necessarily final; that they thought the Russians were possibly bluffing is clear from hundreds of documents. Yet Schmitt makes even this into a reproach for the Central Powers (I, 455-456). And if the threatening language of France and Russia turned out later to be an accurate description of their policies, that was due to French and British encouragement, not to the fact that Russia "was as good as her word" (II, 256).

VII. The Ultimatum

The Austrian ultimatum receives the usual, hypocritical Entente condemnation (I, 459-481). Did Grey not say that it was "the most formidable document I had ever seen addressed by one State to another that was independent"? (I, 1, 477). Schmitt quotes this statement twice, just as though Grey had never seen any other ultimata (Cf. the Italian of 1911) and just as though it were a final pontifical judgment not meant for political use at home and abroad. The fact is that Grey used the ultimatum as a pretext to sell his pro-Russian policy to the cabinet and the Parliament; to say that Grey's judgment

contained eternal truth is a very peculiar interpretation of a diplomatic pronouncement. Schmitt has no hesitation, however; he paraphrases Grey's judgment in the statement that the Austrian demands were such that "an independent state could be expected to submit to only in the face of diplomatic isolation or military defeat" (I, 478).[45]

Germany, too, must bear some responsibility for the harshness of the ultimatum, according to the author; "with at least twenty-one hours at his disposal, there was certainly time for Herr von Jagow to have taken some action if he had wished to do so" (I, 383). But he forgets that changing the terms of the ultimatum would have required at least another week at a time when it was already overdue.

The culmination of the story about the ultimatum is to be found in the fantastic remarks in exculpation of the Serbian government for its passivity in July, 1914. "But, in the long run," writes Schmitt, "what the Serbian Government did or did not do probably made no difference. Austria-Hungary was determined to have war, and it is impossible to doubt that an excuse would have been found to make it" (I, 471). One reads this with astonishment; for a state that is "determined to have war" mobilizes and attacks. The Austrian ultimatum, however, could have

[45]The assumption that Serbia was an independent state does not conform to what we know of Serbian internal and external policies. Nor could anything be much more inaccurate or meaningless than to say that Grey's judgment on the ultimatum "has commanded *general assent*" (I, 477, Italics mine). In spite of the harshness of the ultimatum, however, Schmitt thinks it "may be correct" that Hartwig, if alive, would have counselled Serbian acceptance because of Serbian and Russian military unpreparedness (I, 469). What has become of "independence," "isolation" and "defeat" in this statement?

been accepted. As a method of evading the issue on the Serbian press and diplomacy from the assassination to July 23rd, this sophistry is feeble beyond description. Schmitt himself has stated that the Serbian declaration of July 19th "might have had some effect two weeks previously" (I, 467) and thinks that Hartwig would have urged Serbia to accept the ultimatum (I, 469). For the statement that "it is impossible to doubt that an excuse would have been found to make it" there is absolutely no proof. It is the climax of all the strained theories in "The Coming of the War" about Austro-German plans for war before and after the assassination. To such extreme, unproved and unprovable judgments do the Entente theories lead.

VIII. The Reception of the Ultimatum by the Powers

In his account of the preliminary diplomatic bluffing and skirmishing from July 23rd to July 25th, Schmitt describes the German support of Austria as bluffing (I, 485) and the Entente threats as sincere, open, honest statements of policy (I, 503).[46]

To prove that the Entente was sincere Schmitt describes the Russian military measures of July 24-

[46] In one place (I, 507) he writes that "both the Tsar and M. Sazonov wished to try to bluff the Austrians"; but elsewhere (I, 503) "the German Ambassador was living in a fool's paradise" when he expected Sazonov to "temporize"; "they were completely mistaken" (I, 511) when they (the Germans) "expected that the French Government would seek to restrain its ally"; Grey and Lichnowsky "seized upon every chance that was offered to put in a word for peace" (I, 516) but Grey warned Lichnowsky that England "could do nothing."

25th (I, 504, 511). Here as elsewhere throughout the two volumes he gets confused between partial and general mobilization. While he admits that "preparatory steps would actually be taken along the German frontier" (I, 511) he fails to state that these steps were preparatory to general mobilization. Instead he declares that "only a partial mobilization against Austria-Hungary was being prepared for." This is a very curious way to evade the issue on Russian general mobilization. Unfortunately the same procedure runs through his whole account.

Finally, the reader should notice the conclusion at the end of the chapter (I, 518). There he states that the Entente Powers "were aware, of course, that the acceptance of a compromise by the Central Powers would involve . . . even a diplomatic defeat at the hands of the Entente. On the other hand, they endeavored to make clear what were likely to be the consequences of a refusal." If words mean anything in "The Coming of the War," these words mean that the Entente placed the Central Powers before the alternative of a diplomatic defeat or war. That realistic treatment of Entente plans, however, stands almost alone in the book; elsewhere the Entente Powers are pictured as interested primarily in peace (I, 488-489, 503, 511-517), without mention of their attempts to force a diplomatic defeat on the Central Powers.

Certainly one finds no reference to this aggressive

intention of the Entente in the strained conclusions at the end of the book (II, 480-482).[47]

IX. The Serbian Reply

Needless to say, the author regards the Serbian reply with approval. "By general consent" (I, 535) it was much more conciliatory than was expected. The "conclusive" argument that it was satisfactory is William II's comment on it (I, 538), a comment which the author later on says was inspired not by the Serbian reply but by bad news from Britain (II, 122). Bethmann's favorable judgment of July 30th is also cited (I, 538). Thus the author is enabled to treat in cavalier fashion the objections raised by Austria-Hungary to the note, objections that have been given a fair discussion by other American historians (I, 536-538).[48] But no argument, and no system of logic or mathematics, could justify the author's concluding remarks about the Serbian reply. For, after having admitted that Serbia had refused outright one of the ten demands and made reservations on eight of the others (I, 535-539), he describes the reply as "a conciliatory overture which conceded nine-tenths" of the demands (I, 539). Nor is there any qualitative discrimination which would reveal the fact that the point refused outright was the most important one in the ultimatum.

[47] Since Schmitt indulges in such moralizing over the Austro-German diplomatic manœuvres one would expect him to be horrified at the tricks of the Entente. If he were impartial, he would.

[48] Fay, Vol. II, pp. 341, 344-347; Barnes, 3rd ed., pp. 199-209.

X. Pause Between Volumes

The purpose of the second volume of "The Coming of the War," dealing mostly with the period July 26th to August 4th, is to apply the romantic notions of the first volume to the diplomatic manœuvres after July 25th.

Thus the bellicose Central Powers tried "to terrorize Europe" (II, 256) by threatening a general war (I, 485) if the Entente interfered with localization (II, 1-10). Germany, "frantically urging" Austria to war (II, 65), got herself involved so deeply that she "would probably be constrained, for strictly military reasons,[49] to declare war on Russia on 1 August" (II, 168). Since Conrad's proposals had effectively blocked the "Halt in Belgrad" scheme (II, 168), Bethmann decided for war sometime or other on July 30th because of Russian partial mobilization (II, 199);[50] Russian general mobilization merely "provided a welcome motive for the ultimatum" (II, 265).

The Entente, however, was eminently pacific. Grey proposed mediation, a Conference, and "Halt in Belgrade" in order to prevent war (II, 33-48, 261-262). French diplomacy was "passive" (II, 223) but did urge Russia not to mobilize (II, 232) and Russia decreed partial mobilization only as a "reply" to the Austrian declaration of war on Serbia (II, 85-114) and general mobilization because of Russian suspicions of Germany (II, 243)

[49] The *bordereau* and Liége.

[50] Bethmann also decided to "force the situation" (II, 201) and "to present an ultimatum to Russia" (II, 209) on the 30th.

and Austro-German stubbornness (II, 255-256). The Entente, therefore, was peaceful, defensive and reasonable.

Thus the aggressive militaristic, autocratic Central Powers were checkmated by the peaceful, unmilitaristic, democratic[51] Entente Powers.

That is the Entente myth all over again in all its intellectual crudity.

XI. July 25-28th

Schmitt's account of those days deals with the frantic efforts of the Germans (II, 65) to drive Austria into war with Serbia, the Austrian decision to yield to German pressure (II, 5, 81), the German decisions on the 27th, "to fight the business through" (II, 62-68) and to change front slightly (II, 68-75, 121-131). The "real" cause of the later precipitate decision for a European war is introduced in the account of the difficulties which Generals Conrad and Moltke would have in Galicia and at Liége in case the European war were delayed (II, 59-60, 78-80).

The blunders upon which this reckless account is based require a little attention.

In the first place, the plans of Conrad and Moltke had little or no influence upon the diplomacy of Bethmann, particularly the misinterpreted plans presented by Schmitt.[52] The theory of militarist domination of German policy therefore collapses.

[51] British foreign policy was decided by the cabinet (I, 50, n. 3) and the parliament (II, 398). French policy was decided by the cabinet (II, 228). Public opinion in Russia (II, 22-23), France (II, 229) and Britain (II, 401) supported the government. The arguments, as well as the facts on public opinion, come mostly from Scott's most unsatisfactory "Five Weeks."

[52] See above Chapters IV and V.

The theory that Germany "was frantically urging" Austria to war is a most inaccurate description of German policy from July 25 to 28th. Even if the unreliable Szögyény's dispatch of July 25th be accepted, still it cannot be assumed without further proof that this was also Bethmann's policy. Moreover, the German advice was to make war quickly if the Serbian reply proved unsatisfactory;[53] when the Serbian reply arrived in Berlin and the German government considered the reply satisfactory, Berlin tried to check Vienna with the *Halt in Belgrad* plan, thus showing it would not support Vienna "in all circumstances" and that it was not "frantically urging" Vienna on to war. Furthermore, the Austrian decision for war was not the result of German pressure, as Schmitt would have us believe, but was Berchtold's method of avoiding diplomatic intervention.[54]

[53] Schmitt neglects this qualification because he has already "proved" that the only plan of the Central Powers was war (I, 284-341) and that the ultimatum was unacceptable (I, 478).

[54] Berchtold's anxiety over the long delay involved in the slow mobilization of the Austrian army was expressed even in 1913 (quoted I, 272-273); in 1914 his mind was fully made up on the 26th at the latest to issue the declaration of war on the 28th, as is shown by a document relegated to the footnotes under an account of July 27th by Schmitt (II, 5, n. 2). Schmitt is in error in saying that the ministerial decision of July 19th bound Berchtold not to declare war until mobilization was completed (II, 3); the protocol shows that nothing of the sort was mentioned; in reality the council of July 7th decided that an unsatisfactory Serbian answer was to be followed by mobilization and war without restrictions as to the time of the declaration. Therefore no further consultation was needed for the declaration of war, except in the minds of authors who are trying to show that the qualified advice of Jagow on July 25th was contrary to Austrian official policy. If German pressure had really determined Vienna's declaration of war, why was Tschirschky not informed until the 27th and then only in indefinite terms as to the time? The Austrian decision was made on the 26th to declare war on the 28th; not until the 27th was Tschirschky informed that it would be sent out on the 28th or 29th (II, 5, n. 2 and II, 64, n. 2). Nor did Tschirschky telegraph the news of the Austrian declaration of war until five hours after it had been sent out from Vienna, a strangely slow proceeding if Tschirschky was pressing the Austrians to war and if Berlin were in such a hurry for the declaration (K. D., 311, n. 2).

As for the German decision on the 27th "to fight the business through," Schmitt's account is based on a story in Falkenhayn's biography, which the biographer himself doubts and which Falkenhayn learned *unter der Hand* about a conference he did not attend. To fight this business through Schmitt wrecks the meaning of several good documents and plays fast and loose with hours and minutes.[55]

Finally, one must note the use of Szögyény's most unreliable report of July 27th (II, 72-75).[56] Schmitt thinks it authentic, gives it an impossible interpretation, loads it all on Bethmann and declares (1) that it was "not inconsistent with Herr von Bethmann's note to Vienna" (I, 74), (2) that Bethmann's note to Vienna "was not an honest effort at mediation" (I, 75). The Szögyény telegram declared that Jagow

[55]For example, he gives the impossible interpretation that a Pourtalès' suggestion of direct conversations between Russia and Austria had its main point in a proposed Russian guarantee of Serbian acceptance of a possible Austro-Russian agreement. The main point was the "direct conversations"; Jagow's omission of the guarantee was not "duplicity" (II, 65) but recognition of the fact that Austria would not tolerate Russian dictation of Serbian policy. Moreover he wrecks the chronological order by omitting the time from important documents (II, 65, n. 4; 66, n. 1, n. 3).

[56]This curious telegram of Szögyény has been subjected to a terrific bombardment of criticism. Let us recapitulate the objections that have been raised to its authenticity. (1) There is much doubt as to just what English proposals are referred to in the first paragraph. (2) The first three paragraphs imply that England will not be told of the German rejection of the proposals; the last four paragraphs imply the opposite. (3) One word, *demselben*, in the fourth paragraph, is ordinarily interpreted to refer to London, otherwise the fifth paragraph, giving an example of what was meant in the fourth, would be senseless. Schmitt, of course, maintains that it may just as well mean Vienna, since he wants to prove that an attempt was being made to deceive London. (4) Paragraphs five and six are obviously entirely wrong since no such proposal as is mentioned there was ever made. (5) The procedure described there was not used in the case of the next English proposal, for the proposal, with Bethmann's comments in full, were laid before Berchtold by the German ambassador. (6) The extravagance of language characteristic of Szögyény is quite apparent in this document. (7) Besides, Jagow has denied that he ever said any such thing as Szögyény reports. (8) Not even Professor Schmitt can bridge the gap between Szögyény's words and the Chancellor's telegram of 11:50 P.M., which is just the opposite in tenor and may be interpreted, even if Szögyény's dispatch be accepted, as a change of policy.

did not approve of the English mediation proposals; but Bethmann sent on the latest English proposal for "the consideration of the Vienna Cabinet" and requested Berchtold's "opinion" (II, 71). That Bethmann was sincere is attested by his further request that Vienna consider the Russian suggestion of direct Austro-Russian conversations (K. D., 277). But Schmitt must describe Bethmann and Jagow as deceitful in order to be able to discredit the German "reversal of policy" from July 27th to July 31st. For this purpose neither Szögyény's worst efforts nor Falkenhayn's *unter der Hand* gossip nor impossible interpretations of good documents are too unreliable for "The Coming of the War."

All the main points, therefore, in Schmitt's harsh account of Austro-German diplomacy from July 25th to July 28th are unproved, unimportant and misleading. The same holds for his wishy-washy account of the policies of the Entente Powers.

In the policies of the Entente Powers from July 25th to July 28th, one feature predominates and that is their excessive military preparations. Instead of emphasizing this point, Schmitt emphasizes the peace proposals of the Entente and neglects to show that their chief object was to get the Russian steamroller ready as a political and military weapon.

Grey's mediation and conference proposals would allow Russia to mobilize. Schmitt admits this (II, 41, 46) but tries to prove from Grey's Memoirs that if the Conference had been accepted by Germany Grey "was prepared 'to give or get guarantees

that there would be no mobilizations during the conference'" (II, 47),[57] without citing any contemporary evidence that any such thing was planned. As for the mediation proposal, Grey told Benckendorff that Russia should accept it because, "if the diplomatic intervention failed, Russia would meanwhile have gained time for her mobilization."[58] But Grey did not intend to encourage Russia to mobilize, according to Schmitt, for (1) "he took it for granted that if Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia, Russia would mobilize"; (2) "he seems to have considered Russian mobilization justified" (II, 41). Now that is peculiar logic: for if Grey told the Russians that he assumed that they would mobilize and if he "did most honestly feel" (1925; II, 41, note) that Russian mobilization was justified, then he must have encouraged them to mobilize. Grey's object, according to a statement that Schmitt passes over lightly (II, 46), was to give time "for the situation to be altered to the disadvantage of Germany." No amount of ambiguous excuse-making can remove the plain facts of this realistic British policy; no neutral historian would even attempt to camouflage them.

Schmitt does admit that British "measures preparatory for war were more advanced than those of any other Great Power" because of "accidental" circumstances (II, 44-45) and that the military preparations of the French were more advanced than the German (I, 20, 226). But the French and

[57] This unjustified conclusion is bolstered up by a most erroneous footnote (II, 47, n. 1). See above pp. 122-123.

[58] B. D., XI, 132, July 25. Schmitt fails to quote this passage, II, 40-41.

German measures cannot be compared, according to Schmitt, because "once either government had made up its mind to fight rather than accept diplomatic defeat at the hands of the other, the details of military preparations are of small consequence" (II, 20). By this statement Schmitt does not mean to declare that the military information his book is supposed to convey is all nonsensical. Not at all. What he really means is that military preparations are, in his Sunday-school views of diplomacy, wicked manœuvres and that when he has evidence of advanced military preparations on the part of the Entente Powers he must find some way to evade the unpleasant facts.

As for the Russian attitude, "the court, the foreign office, and the army . . ." "were all anxious for a pacific solution" (II, 27) and Russian "diplomacy was conciliatory, *at least outwardly*" (II, 33. Italics mine). Schmitt admits the Russian Government "was preparing for all emergencies" (II, 33) but carefully refrains from mentioning the fact that Russian preparations were not only for partial but also for *general* mobilization (II, 31-33).

Thus the legend of the peaceful Entente versus the bellicose Germanic Colossus staggers through July 28th; it will stagger on.

XII. July 29th

For anyone who is trying—consciously or unconsciously—to maintain the legend of the peaceful Entente, the events of July 29th present insuperable

difficulties. For on that day Russia, encouraged by France and Britain, decreed partial mobilization and changed the Austro-Serbian conflict into a European matter. On that day, too, Grey proposed "Halt in Belgrade" but with the assumption that Russia would mobilize,[59] and Poincaré's arrival on French soil stirred both government and people to a more bellicose attitude. How can these facts be minimized?

The most important, Russian partial mobilization, is labelled "Russia's reply" to the Austrian declaration of war on Serbia (II, pp. 85-114), without the obvious conclusion that this act turned the Austro-Serbian conflict into a European one and that it would not have been possible if France[60] and Britain had not encouraged Russia.[61] Nor does he see fit to point out that Austrian partial mobilization in the south was no menace to Russia or to prove Sazonov's assertion that Russia's " 'vital interests' " were at stake (II, 113).

As for the French and British policies on the 29th it is sufficient here to note that Schmitt considers that if France had not supported Russia "the peace of Europe would probably have been preserved"[62]

[59] An assumption which Schmitt neglects, II, 159-160, 168-170.

[60] At one place he does quote the statement of Sazonov to the effect that French support at the moment of deciding was "especially valuable" (II, 108); but he hurries on to show that Germany was to blame for the Russian decision.

[61] Instead of an evaluation of the merits of William II's telegram that caused the Tsar to turn from general to partial mobilization on July 29th, Schmitt simply writes, "This appeal disclosed rather naïvely the programme which William II and his chancellor had framed" . . . (II, 110).

[62] This statement belongs over a hundred pages ahead of where it is placed; it should be included in the account of "Russia's Reply." Schmitt's attitude on French support is bewildering if one reads his other statement that on the 30th "the Russian action would doubtless have been the same" even without the French declaration of support (II, 236).

but it would have been "a peace established by threats" (II, 229). By this he probably means to contrast the Austro-German localization scheme with the "honourable peace" that Grey's conference would have obtained under the pressure of Russian mobilization (II, 47).

The Sunday-school philosophy apparent in the account of Entente policies on July 29th suddenly changes to what purports to be stern realism when the author talks of Austro-German policies on the 29th. Yet this stern realism turns out to be nothing but the romantic view, because of its sensationalist misinterpretation of the military plans of the Central Powers.

The list of militarist plans that dominated Austro-German diplomacy and made Bethmann a mere pawn in the game include

(1) The *bordereau,*[63] which "shows" that Bethmann's scheme of "Halt in Belgrad" was impossible because of the plans of Conrad and that Bethmann would therefore be forced to declare war on August 1st "for strictly military reasons" (II, 168). This preposterous series of unwarranted assertions[64] precedes the account of Bethmann's six peace efforts on the night of July 29th (II, 168-171) and completely distorts the picture.

(2) Moltke's memorandum of July 28-29th, which "shows" that Moltke did not "declare his oppo-

[63] See above, Chapter IV. The *bordereau* is ruthlessly injected into Bethmann's policy of the 29th, also in the erroneous conclusions that Bethmann yielded to Conrad (II, 135, 167).

[64] See above, pp. 79-80.

sition to the war"[65] but "clearly" regarded it "as certain to come"[66] (II, 137) and wanted an ultimatum sent to Russia (II, 139). A neutral historian, however, could not escape the conclusion that Moltke here showed greater abhorrence of war than any military man of the Entente and that he recognized clearly the danger to Germany from the advanced state of Franco-Russian military preparations.

(3) The preposterous, sensationalist, misplaced and misunderstood story of the German plan for a *coup de main* at Liége (II, 149-151), which "shows" that "a decision about peace or war" was "urgent from the military point of view" and that this point of view dominated Bethmann's policy on the evening of the 29th (II, 151-156). The mere fact that the measures Schmitt cites to "show" this—sending the ultimatum to Brussels and the bid for British neutrality—coincided with strenuous efforts to prevent a European war cannot hold him back from his conclusion that "strictly military reasons" (II, 168) dictated German policy.

(4) Bethmann's insincerity, which "shows" that he was willing to have a continental war if Britain stayed out of it (II, 171-172). But even Schmitt cannot help remarking that Bethmann's peace

[65] Moltke merely wrote that the war, if it came, would "destroy the Kultur of almost all Europe for decades"—a passage not quoted by Schmitt (II, 137-138).

[66] Moltke merely wrote that it was "of the greatest importance to ascertain as soon as possible whether Russia and France intend to let it come to a war with Germany" (II, 138).

efforts on the night of July 29-30th would prove "his entire sincerity, had he not omitted from the telegram of Count Pourtalès which he transmitted (to Vienna), the statement that M. Sazonov 'was grasping at every straw' to avoid war" (II, 171). Just how Bethmann's insincerity is proved by the omission of this passage is difficult to see; for, if Sazonov were really "grasping at every straw" and Bethmann told the Austrians about it, that would have the effect of making the Austrians more intransigeant. Therefore, this "insincerity" of Bethmann's turns out to be a plain, obvious, unmistakable effort to get the Austrians to yield.

These are the four major facts Schmitt relies on to prove that Austro-German policy on July 29th was dictated by military men. They are all flatly wrong.

XIII. July 30th[67]

Anti-German prejudice and misunderstanding of diplomacy—the two chief faults of "The Coming of the War"—reach their culmination in the account of July 30th. Since Russia decreed general mobilization on that day and thus precipitated the World War, Professor Schmitt must produce his most strenuous efforts to prove his case for July 30th.

For Russian general mobilization he reproduces all the excuses that have ever been made by Entente defenders and adds a few of his own. Let us recapitulate the methods by which he evades the issue:

[67] For the extraordinary series of errors in Schmitt's account of July 30th in Berlin see above, Chapter VII.

(1) It "was the logical and only reply possible to the policy of surprise with which the Austro-Hungarian and German Governments sought to overawe and even to terrorize Europe" (II, 256). This is an evasion of the distinction between an Austro-Serbian war and a European war. The moral question really is whether or not Russia had the right to drag all Europe into war over her Balkan ambitions. To this Schmitt replies, Russia "announced at the very beginning that she would not tolerate an invasion of Serbia; when her warning was disregarded, she was as good as her word"—which is simply an evasion of the moral standards which he applies to Austro-German actions.

(2) In denying that Germany was forced to declare war by Russian general mobilization he resorts to the following evasions:

A. The substitution of Russian partial for general mobilization as the motive of the German government.

B. The perversion of the German warnings of July 26th and 29th into warnings against Russian partial mobilization.[68]

C. The substitution of Conrad's plans and the Liége myth for Russian general mobilization as a motive in German diplomacy.

D. The conclusion that the "Russian diplomatists appear not to have appreciated sufficiently the probable effect of their military

[68] See above, pp. 89-95.

measures on the highly strung German general staff," in total disregard of the fact that the Russians did appreciate the effect and that the effect was felt on the decisions of the German government as well as those of the German general staff.

E. The distortion of German knowledge of Russian general mobilization.

(3) The assertions that "As a sovereign state Russia was legally entitled to dispose of her troops within her own territory as she saw fit" and "law, so far as there was any, sustained the Russian contention" that mobilization did not mean war, simply disregard the fact that this was a political not a legal matter.

(4) He places the account of Russian general mobilization:

A. After the account of Austrian general mobilization.

B. Before a chapter entitled "Peace or War?"

(5) He omits Sazonov's statement in his memoirs that he considered futile all efforts to preserve peace after July 28-29th.

(6) He invents a German "decision for war" on July 30th before the news of Russian general mobilization reached Berlin.[69]

In these ways Professor Schmitt strives to evade the plain, obvious and unmistakable fact that Russian general mobilization precipitated the war.

[69] He denies, of course, that France (II, 232) and Britain (II, 261) had anything to do with encouraging Russia to mobilize.

As for German policy on July 30th, "The Coming of the War" is completely at sea. The awful effects of false historical efforts to maintain the Entente myth can be seen in the account of the German "decision for war" on July 30th.[70]

It will suffice to note here that the motives for this mythical German "decision for war" are given differently in different places—Liége, Conrad, William II, German pressure on Austria, all serve their turn. Only at the end does it become apparent that the cause of German anxiety was Russian general mobilization (II, 211-213).

Perhaps it would be proper to note here also the fact that Schmitt declares in another place (II, 327) that the Russian "decision for war" had been "made as far back as 29 July, and perhaps at an earlier date."

Thus it appears that all the hectic speculation about German policy on July 30th is wasted; from Schmitt's own account the Russian decision came first.

XIV. July 31st and After

The account of July 31st and the days following it contains nothing beyond the absurd consequences of the unproved theories about the previous days.

XV. Conclusion

One can only say, at the end, that "The Coming of the War" contains a series of errors and misun-

[70] See above, Chapter VII. Schmitt, II, 186-213.

derstandings of the origins of the World War on every crucial point from the making of the alliances through the outbreak of the War. It is unsound and its doctrines are unproved. It is full of errors of the most serious kind on racial, economic, military and diplomatic matters. It is the most misleading book on the subject that has yet appeared.

CHAPTER IX

Conclusion

THE purpose of this little book is to expose the dangers of unhistorical efforts to maintain the bogus Entente propaganda. In Professor Schmitt's "The Coming of the War" one finds the attempt made to reconcile this political propaganda with documentary evidence. The results are so unhistorical in every sense of the word that it is to be hoped that the Salvagers will give up similar attempts, will recognize that there are many sides to the controversy over the origin of the World War and will certainly not rely on Schmitt's most defective story for their judgments of what took place in July, 1914.

The example of "The Coming of the War" is all the more instructive because it represents the culmination of sixteen years of unhistorical efforts to maintain a stupid set of outrageous doctrines at the expense of American intellectual integrity. With France, except for the intelligentsia and the Socialists, little can be done; even the army men there are infected with the superstitions of 1914 and French historians will very slowly become impartial on this subject. As for Britain, no one need worry about British ability to alter the national thinking on the subject of the war; it will change as British political

interests change and the more it changes the object of its hostile propaganda the more it will remain the same sentimental, moralistic coating for concrete interests that it has been for nearly four hundred years. But American historical thinking ought to be free from both French nationalistic prejudices and the shifting sentimentality of the British ruling classes. It is beneath our dignity to adopt the illusions of Entente propagandists like Renouvin who are themselves the dupes of their governments. Besides, the French and British do not respect those who grovel at their feet: witness Temperley's shabby treatment of "The Coming of the War" in the Serbionic *Foreign Affairs*.

American emancipation from the latest European craze has been difficult to combat previously because it was not clear how dangerous it was. That was not apparent before Professor Schmitt was kind enough to show us the abyss into which Entente propaganda would lead American historians. But now everyone can see just where the Entente political nonsense will lead us when worked up by Grelling, Kanner, Poincaré, Renouvin, Grey, Asquith, Churchill, Seton-Watson, Temperley, E. R. Turner, Hazen, Anderson, Slosson, and Beck, and propagated by such publications as *Foreign Affairs* and *The Journal of Modern History*.

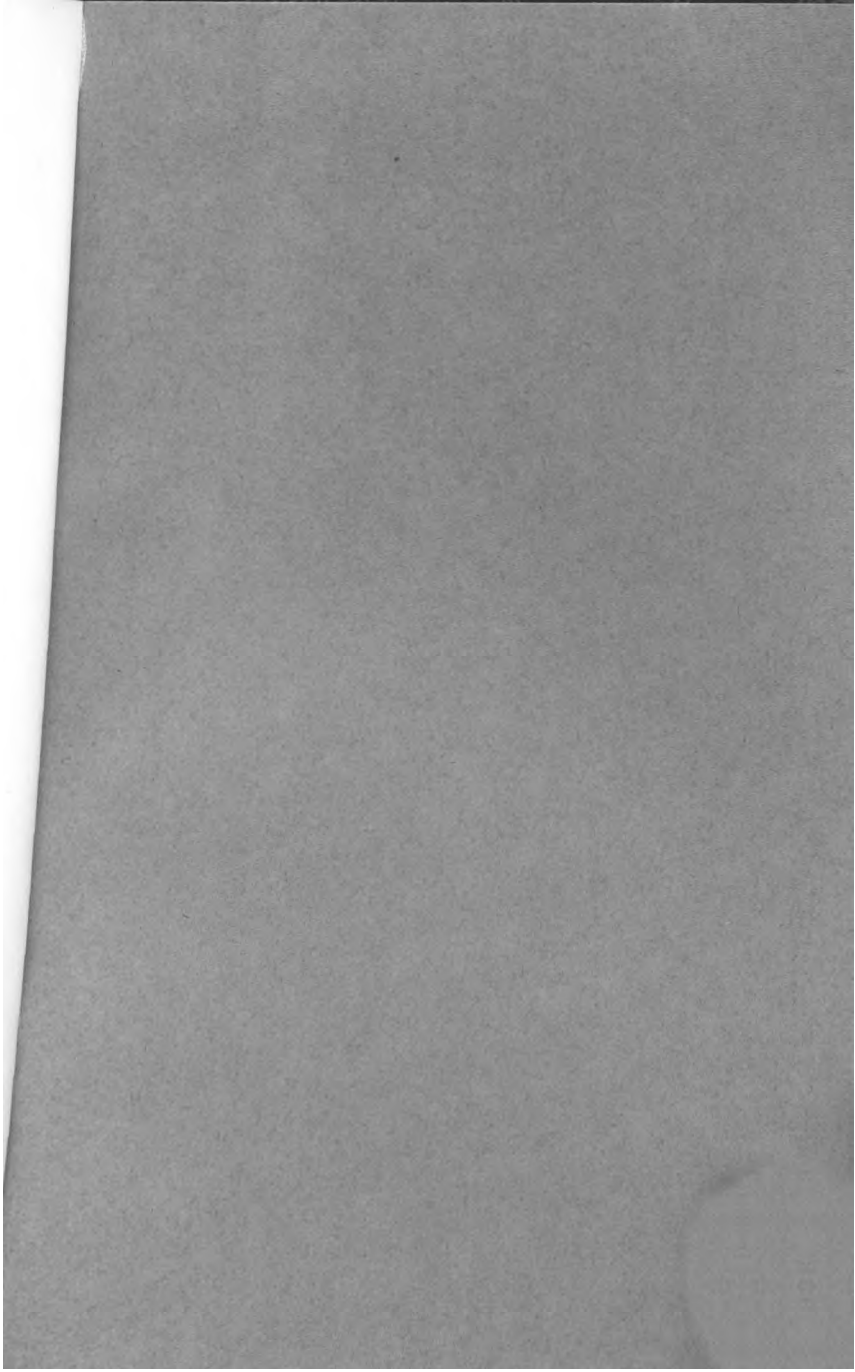
From all of these sources Schmitt has derived the indigestible pro-Entente theories which he has attempted to assimilate and fit into the documents. The Conrad-Moltke-Kanner-Schmitt *bordereau* came

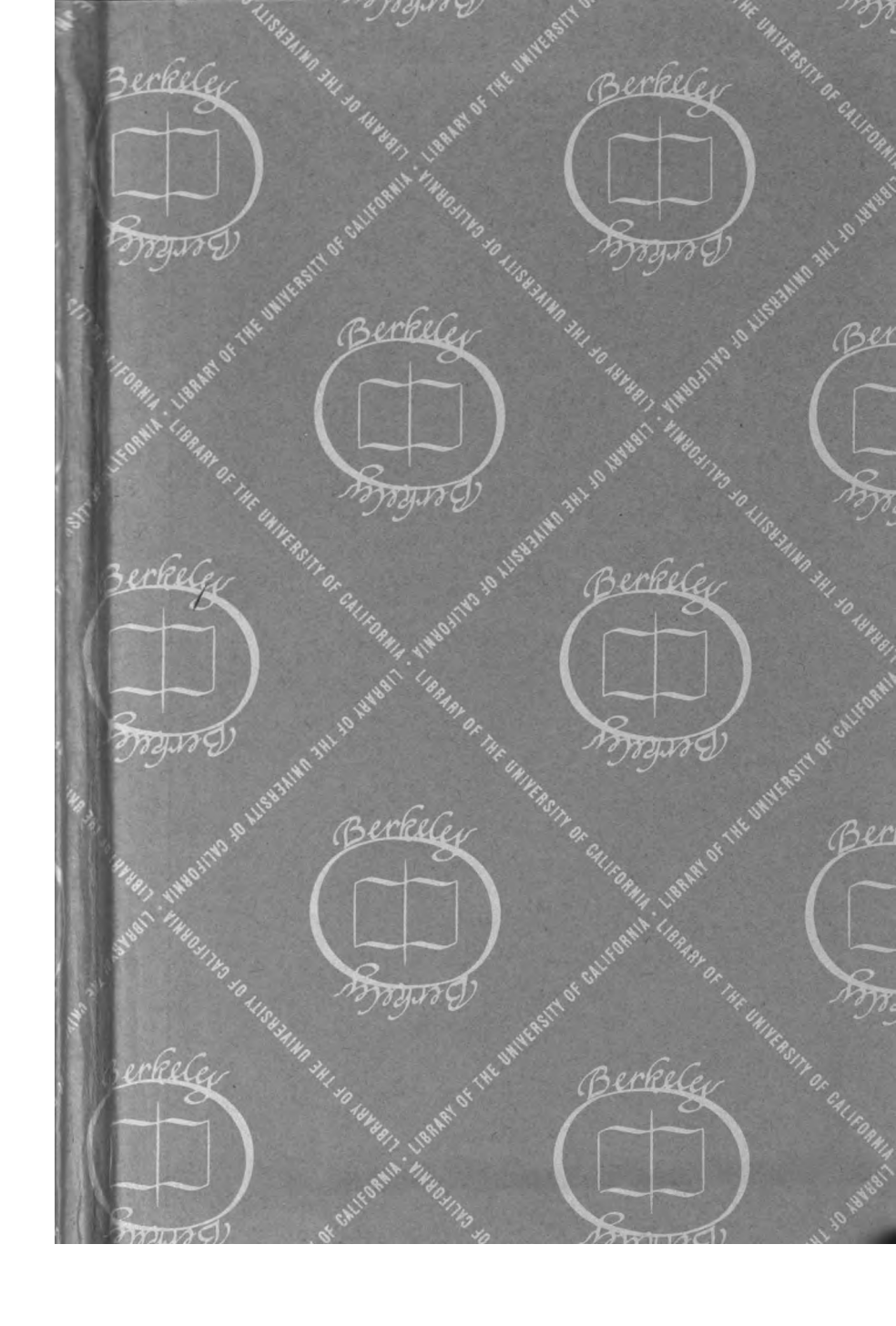
from Kanner. The Liége nonsense came partly from Eugen Fischer and partly from T. H. Thomas, who professes to be a military expert, writing in *Foreign Affairs*. The adoration of St. Edward of Fallodon merely exaggerates the blind reverence for British institutions and policies all-too-common among our writers on political and international matters. The excuses for poor little, clean Serbia came from Seton-Watson and Armstrong, the editors of *The Slavonic Review* and of *Foreign Affairs* (American). From writers in these two magazines and from Renouvin, Poincaré and Kantorowitz come the elaborate, tricky evasions in dealing with the responsibility of Russia for precipitating the war, though one must admit that Schmitt's defense of Russian general mobilization as a frank act of moral integrity is original with him. The accusations and suspicions of Austro-German policy are culled from writers the world over, none being too ridiculous for Schmitt, who even reproduces Grey's astrological obscurantism. The custom of thinking of Germany only as a military machine dates back at least to Mirabeau, was freshened up by the apologists for Napoleon III, the French Republicans and the German Socialists and given new impetus by the Crowe-Nicolson-Grey-Asquith-Lloyd George wreckers of Liberalism. The unsatisfactory materials and strange conclusions of Scott's study of the European press during the July crisis are reproduced wholesale. The all-important German "decision for war" on July 30th comes from Kanner; the nonsense about Bel-

gian neutrality from Grey and Asquith and sentimental publicists who follow them. Even Schmitt's methods are derived from pro-Entente stalwarts; the excessive reliance on unreliable Bavarian sources comes from Renouvin (who at least had the grace to put them mostly in the footnotes), the melodramatic climaxes from alarmist propagandists during the war; but one must admit that Schmitt's inveterate habit of mistranslating important documents is original with him, at least in its quantity. In general, the immaturity of outlook and the ignorance of European conditions apparent in "The Coming of the War" comes from an unhistorical attempt to reconcile Entente political propaganda with historical facts.

"The Coming of the War," then, is an indigestible concoction of Entente propaganda and garbled documents. It appeals chiefly to those American "Salvagers" who hoped that it would restore to vogue the war legends they so vociferously propagated. Unfortunately for them, their Humpty-Dumpty can never be put together again. Schmitt's effort is a colossal failure. The mere fact that the "Salvagers" should hail this most defective performance with delight and crown it with the Beer and Pulitzer prizes furnishes the best proof of their intellectual bankruptcy.

If they, and Schmitt, had their way, American studies on the origin of the World War would be thrown back a whole generation. To prevent such a catastrophe this little book was written.

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